

NORMAL ENGLISH PROSE

# NORMAL ENGLISH PROSE

*Selected by*  
T. EARLE WELBY  
AND  
ERIC GILLETTE

*Adapted and edited for Indian Universities by*  
K. SWAMINATHAN, B.A. (Oxon.)  
*Presidency College, Madras*

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS

*First Published 1934*

PRINTED IN INDIA

AT THE, DIOCESAN PRESS, MADRAS—1935. C2705.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE Publishers' thanks for permission to include copyright extracts are due to : The Trustees of the late Mrs. Russell Barrington for extracts from Walter Bagehot's essays on 'Shakespeare—The Man' and 'William Pitt' from *The Works and Life of Walter Bagehot*, edited by Mrs. Russell Barrington and published by Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd. ; Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd. for the 'Prelude' to Neville Cardus's *Cricket* ; Messrs. Methuen for Hilaire Belloc's 'The Onion-eater' and 'The Good Woman' from *Hills and the Sea* ; Messrs. Edward Arnold & Co. for 'Childishness' and 'Mutual Admiration Societies' from *Modern Essays from The Times*, edited by J. W. Mackail ; and to Sir William Marris, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., for extracts from 'Convocation Address, Lucknow University', 'All-India Music Conference' and 'Hindustani Academy, Lucknow' from a collection of his *Speeches*, printed by the Oxford University Press.



## INTRODUCTION

THIS selection of English prose passages falls into neither of the two categories into one or other of which most anthologies of English prose have fallen

In the first place, it is not illustrative of the whole range of English prose. Secondly, it is not a collection of those passages in which English prose has reached its greatest heights. The aim of the selectors has been simply to bring together a body of good and unmannered, or at least not perilously mannered, modern English prose, such prose as the student may reasonably study when seeking models for his own essays.

The hitherto unmet need for such a volume of selections arises from the fact that a great deal of the finest English prose is the work of men whose personality coloured their writings so as to make them highly unsuitable models upon which to base a normal prose 'style.' An anthology which displays English prose at its very greatest inevitably contains many passages perilous to the young student even when English is his mother-tongue. They are incalculably more perilous to the student for whom English is a foreign language. We know, by actual experience, that it is a natural tendency for the student, eager to spread

## INTRODUCTION

his wings, to take as his model the most flowery and involved writer whose work happens to fall under his youthful eye.

To employ a homely comparison, the child must learn to crawl and then to walk before it can hope to run, and we believe that the young writer must first learn to use simple, necessary words before he essays descriptive passages with a complicated use of imagery. To the writer with an imperfect knowledge of a language the use of words imperfectly understood is equivalent to playing with fire. Our aim in this selection is to show how much can be accomplished without rhetorical flourishes or the elaborate employment of metaphor and simile.

Walter Pater, himself a master of colour and music and delicate elaboration, laid it down that, whatever may be the accidentals of style, its essential is *expressiveness*. Now, the first condition of expressiveness is that the writer should know precisely what he is trying to express. What has not been completely thought out will never get itself completely expressed : to do justice to a subject it is necessary to have one, and a hazy notion is not a subject. It was of poetry that D. G. Rossetti said it must have 'fundamental brain-work', and 'mental cartooning', but his sayings are equally applicable to prose. He who would write good prose must, then, have a subject, seized by his mind and not merely drifting through it. Next, he must have adequate means of expression, that is to say, an understood

## INTRODUCTION

vocabulary and the power of so building the sentence that it contributes to the paragraph, of so building the paragraph that it contributes to the whole composition what it should—neither less nor more.

Many have thought to simplify the problem of vocabulary by urging the student to an invariable and mechanical preference for short and Anglo-Saxon words over long and Latinate words. Nothing could be more foolish.\* The question can never be of long or short, of Anglo-Saxon or Latin : it must always be a question of exact fitness for the purpose. What is of prime importance is that the young writer should know the meanings of the words he uses—not merely the starveling meanings they have in inferior dictionaries but the rich meanings they have from use by numbers of great writers. It will be well for him to pay heed to the shade of original meaning that lingers in so many words now vulgarly used without any thought of that old meaning. It will be well for him to give up good words which an illiterate popular Press has perverted, for rightly as he may use them the unhappy associations they now have will afflict his reader.

As for the sentence, he will do well to reject all arbitrary restrictions on its length, but it will be prudent in him to reflect that a very long sentence is difficult to manage. He will do well also to subdue each sentence to the business of the paragraph, and to tone down or delete every sentence that starts out of its context.

## INTRODUCTION

But we need not continue with elementary advice upon particular points: the best usages are exemplified in this volume of selections from English prose. Generalized advice is of little worth when we have available these particular embodied counsels of perfection. It is to them and their like that the student must go incessantly, not to be an imitator of superficial characteristics but to discover, as far as he can, the animating principle of the prose of this and that master or good craftsman.

The temptation, which no young writer has altogether escaped, is to attempt too much. Youth is the season for great literary projects, preferably in verse, but if we decide to write seriously in prose in those early days, we have the convinced intention of making English express at least as much as it has ever done before. In middle-age it is a consolation to know that we once managed to achieve a tolerable paragraph about some very humble matter. In the course of compiling this selection we are aware that we may be chilling some warm hopes; there is not much between these covers to encourage a luxuriant and ambitious prose.

We feel that we are like Keats when he wrote to Shelley begging him to curb his magnanimity; or, to speak more modestly and in confession of our fears, we are like the very unpleasant lady in Tennyson 'with a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart'. But our young readers, with the generosity of youth, will forgive

## INTRODUCTION

us. We mean well, and we hope that we have not done altogether ill. At least we have come to this task with certain qualifications. One of us has spent some years expounding English literature to Oriental and also to English students ; the other has lived by his pen as a critic and essayist, in England and in the East, for many years. But we would not insist on our qualifications, such as they are. Rather would we ask students to regard this as a friendly and practical book, as an endeavour to provide them with the sort of guidance which a senior working man of letters will sometimes give to a junior.

T. EARLE WELBY

ERIC GILLETT

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	...	...	...	vii
The Indian Kings.	Joseph Addison	...	...	1
The Evils of Party-spirit.	Joseph Addison	...	...	6
The Evils of Party-spirit (cont.)	Joseph Addison	...	...	11
The Vision of Mirzah.	Joseph Addison	...	...	17
The Fame Coach.	Oliver Goldsmith	...	...	24
A Visit to Westminster Abbey.	Oliver Goldsmith	...	...	32
The Vendors of Quack Medicines and Nostrums Ridiculed.	Oliver Goldsmith	...	...	39
The Distresses of a Common Soldier.	Oliver Goldsmith	...	...	42
On Putting Sentences Together and on Figurative Language.	William Cobbett	...	...	51
Courtship.	William Cobbett	...	...	56
An Idyll of New Brunswick.	William Cobbett	...	...	60
Domestic Happiness.	William Cobbett	...	...	69
On Shooting.	William Cobbett	...	...	74
A Retired Tobacconist and His Family.	Robert Southey	...	...	80
Letters.	Robert Southey	...	...	87
Shakespeare—The Man.	Walter Bagehot	...	...	103
The Education of Pitt.	Walter Bagehot	...	...	111
Convocation Address, Lucknow University.	Sir William Marris	...	...	117

# CONTENTS

All-India Music Conference, Lucknow.	Sir William			
Marris	...	...	...	128
Hindustani Academy, Lucknow.	Sir William Marris			133
The Onion-eater.	Hilaire Belloc	...	...	143
The Good Woman.	Hilaire Belloc	...	...	148
Childishness.	From <i>The Times</i>	...	...	154
Mutual Admiration Societies.	From <i>The Times</i>	...	...	157
Cricket.	Neville Cardus	...	...	162
NOTES	...	...	...	169

# ADDISON

## THE INDIAN KINGS'

*Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dixit.*

Never do nature and wisdom speak differently.

JUV. *Sat.* xiv. 321

WHEN the four Indian kings were in this country about a twelvemonth ago, I often mixed with the rabble, and followed them a whole day together, being wonderfully struck with the sight of every thing that is new or uncommon. I have, since their departure, employed a friend to make many enquiries of their landlord the upholsterer relating to their manners and conversation, as also concerning the remarks which they made in this country : for, next to the forming a right notion of such strangers, I should be desirous of learning what ideas they have conceived of us.

The upholsterer, finding my friend very inquisitive about these his lodgers, brought him some time since a little bundle of papers, which he assured him were written by King Sa Ga Yean Qua Rash Tow, and, as he supposes, left behind by some mistake. These papers are now translated, and contain abundance of very odd observations, which I find this little fraternity of kings made during their stay in the isle of Great



Britain. I shall present my reader with a short specimen of them in this paper, and may perhaps communicate more to him hereafter. In the article of London are the following words, which without doubt are meant of the church of St. Paul

‘On the most rising part of the town there stands a huge house big enough to contain the whole nation of which I am king. Our good brother E Tow O Koam, king of the Rivers, is of opinion it was made by the hands of that great God to whom it is consecrated. The kings of Granajah and of the Six Nations believe that it was created with the earth, and produced on the same day with the sun and moon. But for my own part, by the best information that I could get of this matter I am apt to think that this prodigious pile was fashioned into the shape it now bears by several tools and instruments, of which they have a wonderful variety in this country. It was probably at first an huge mis-shapen rock that grew upon the top of the hill, which the natives of the country (after having cut it into a kind of regular figure) bored and hollowed with incredible pain and industry, until they had wrought in it all those beautiful vaults and caverns into which it is divided at this day. As soon as this rock was thus curiously scooped to their liking, a prodigious number of hands must have been employed in chipping the outside of it, which is now as smooth as the surface of a pebble ; and is in several places hewn out into pillars that stand like the trunks of so many trees, bound about the top with garlands

of leaves. It is probable that when this great work was begun, which must have been many hundred years ago, there was some religion among this people, for they give it the name of a temple, and have a tradition that it was designed for them to pay their devotions in. And indeed, there are several reasons which make us think that the natives of this country had formerly among them some sort of worship; for they set apart every seventh day as sacred; but upon my going into one of these holy houses on that day, I could not observe any circumstance of devotion in their behaviour: there was indeed a man in black who was mounted above the rest, and seemed to utter something with a great deal of vehemence; but as for those underneath him, instead of paying their worship to the Deity of the place, they were most of them bowing and curtsying to one another, and a considerable number of them fast asleep.

The queen of the country appointed two men to attend us, that had enough of our language to make themselves understood in some few particulars. But we soon perceived these two were great enemies to one another, and did not always agree in the same story. We could make a shift to gather out of one of them, that this island was very much infested with a monstrous kind of animals, in the shape of men, called Whigs; and he often told us that he hoped we should meet with none of them in our way, for that if we did they would be apt to knock us down for being kings.

'Our other interpreter used to talk very much of a kind of animal called a Tory, that was as great a monster as the Whig, and would treat us as ill for being foreigners. These two creatures, it seems, are born with a secret antipathy to one another, and engage when they meet as naturally as the elephant and the rhinoceros. But as we saw none of either of these species, we are apt to think that our guides deceived us with misrepresentations and fictions, and amused us with an account of such monsters as are not really in their country.

'These particulars we made a shift to pick out from the discourse of our interpreters ; which we put together as well as we could, being able to understand but here and there a word of what they said, and afterwards making up the meaning of it among ourselves. The men of the country are very cunning and ingenious in handicraft works, but withal so very idle, that we often saw young lusty rawboned fellows carried up and down the streets in little covered rooms by a couple of porters, who are hired for that service. Their dress is likewise very barbarous, for they almost strangle themselves about the neck, and bind their bodies with many ligatures, that we are apt to think are the occasion of several distempers among them which our country is entirely free from. Instead of those beautiful feathers with which we adorn our heads, they often buy up a monstrous bush of hair, which covers their heads, and falls down in a large fleece below the middle of their backs ;

with which they walk up and down the streets, and are as proud of it as if it was their own growth.

'We were invited to one of their public diversions, where we hoped to have seen the great men of their country running down a stag, or pitching a bar, that we might have discovered who were the persons of the greatest abilities among them ; but instead of that, they conveyed us into a huge room lighted up with abundance of candles, where this lazy people sat still above three hours to see several feats of ingenuity performed by others, who it seems were paid for it.

'As for the women of the country, not being able to talk with them we could only make our remarks upon them at a distance. They let the hair of their heads grow to a great length ; but as the men made a great show with the heads of hair that are none of their own, the women, who they say have very fine heads of hair, tie it up in a knot, and cover it from being seen. The women look like angels, and would be more beautiful than the sun, were it not for little black spots that are apt to break out in their faces, and sometimes rise in very odd figures. I have observed that those little blemishes wear off very soon ; but when they disappear in one part of the face, they are very apt to break out in another, insomuch that I have seen a spot upon the forehead in the afternoon, which was upon the chin in the morning.'

The author then proceeds to shew the absurdity of breeches and petticoats, and many other curious observations, which I shall reserve for another

occasion. I cannot however conclude this paper without taking notice, that amidst these wild remarks, there now and then appears something very reasonable. I cannot likewise forbear observing, that we are all guilty in some measure of the same narrow way of thinking, which we meet with in this abstract of the Indian Journal, when we fancy the customs, dresses, and manners of other countries are ridiculous and extravagant, if they do not resemble those of our own.

From *The Spectator*

## THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT

*Ne, pueri, ne tanta animis assuescite bella,  
Neu patriæ validas in viscera vertite vires.*

VIRG. *Æn.* vi. 832.

Embrace again, my sons, be foes no more,  
Nor stain your country with her children's gore.

DRYDEN

My worthy friend Sir Roger, when we are talking of the malice of parties, very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a school-boy, which was at a time when the feuds ran high between the Roundheads and Cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had occasion to inquire which was the way to St. Anne's lane ; upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering his question, called him a young Popish cur, and asked him who had

made Anne a saint ! The boy, being in some confusion, inquired of the next he met, which was the way to Anne's lane ; but was called a prick-eared cur for his pains, and instead of being shewn the way, was told that she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged. Upon this, says Sir Roger, I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but going into every lane of the neighbourhood, asked what they called the name of that lane. • By which ingenious artifice he found out the place he inquired after, without giving offence to any party. Sir Roger generally closes this narrative with reflexions on the mischief that parties do in the country ; how they spoil good neighbourhood, and make honest gentlemen hate one another ; besides that they manifestly tend to the prejudice of the land-tax, and the destruction of the game.

There cannot a greater judgement befall a country than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a government into two distinct people, and makes them greater strangers and more averse to one another, than if they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a division are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person. This influence is very fatal both to men's morals and their understandings ; it sinks the virtue of a nation, and not only so, but destroys even commonsense.

A furious party-spirit, when it rages in its full violence, exerts itself in civil war and bloodshed ; and, when it is under its greatest restraints, naturally breaks out in falsehood, detraction, calumny, and a partial administration of justice. In a word, it fills a nation with spleen and rancour, and extinguishes all the seeds of good-nature, compassion, and humanity.

Plutarch says very finely, that a man should not allow himself to hate even his enemies, because, says he, 'if you indulge this passion on some occasions, it will rise of itself in others ; if you hate your enemies, you will contract such a vicious habit of mind, as by degrees will break out upon those who are your friends, or those who are indifferent to you.' I might here observe how admirably this precept of morality (which derives the malignity of hatred from the passion itself, and not from its object) answers to that great rule which was dictated to the world about an hundred years before this philosopher wrote ; but instead of that, I shall only take notice, with a real grief of heart, that the minds of many good men among us appear soured with party-principles, and alienated from one another in such a manner, as seems to me altogether inconsistent with the dictates either of reason or religion. Zeal for a public cause is apt to breed passions in the hearts of virtuous persons, to which the regard of their own private interest would never have betrayed them.

If this party-spirit has so ill an effect on our

## THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT

morals, it has likewise a very great one upon our judgements. We often hear a poor insipid paper or pamphlet cried up, and sometimes a noble piece depreciated, by those who are of a different principle from the author. One who is actuated by this spirit is almost under an incapacity of discerning either real blemishes or beauties. A man of merit in a different principle, is like an object seen in two different mediums, that appears crooked or broken, however straight and entire it may be in itself. For this reason there is scarce a person of any figure in England who does not go by two contrary characters, as opposite to one another as light and darkness. Knowledge and learning suffer in a particular manner from this strange prejudice, which at present prevails amongst all ranks and degrees in the British nation. As men formerly became eminent in learned societies by their parts and acquisitions, they now distinguish themselves by the warmth and violence with which they espouse their respective parties. Books are valued upon the like considerations : an abusive scurrilous style passes for satire, and a dull scheme of party notions is called fine writing.

There is one piece of sophistry practised by both sides, and that is the taking any scandalous story, that has been ever whispered or invented of a private man, for a known undoubted truth, and raising suitable speculations upon it. Calumnies that have been never proved, or have been refuted, are the ordinary postulatum of these



infamous scribblers, upon which they proceed as upon first principles granted by all men, though in their hearts they know they are false, or at best very doubtful. When they have laid these foundations of scurrility, it is no wonder that their superstructure is every way answerable to them. If this shameless practice of the present age endures much longer, praise and reproach will cease to be motives of action in good men.

There are certain periods of time in all governments when this inhuman spirit prevails. Italy was long torn in pieces by the Guelfs and Ghibellines, and France by those who were for and against the League : but it is very unhappy for a man to be born in such a stormy and tempestuous season. It is the restless ambition of artful men, that thus breaks a people into factions, and draws several well-meaning persons to their interest by a specious concern for their country. How many honest minds are filled with uncharitable and barbarous notions, out of their zeal for the public good? What cruelties and outrages would they not commit against men of an adverse party, whom they would honour and esteem, if instead of considering them as they are represented, they knew them as they are? Thus are persons of the greatest probity seduced into shameful errors and prejudices, and made bad men even by that noblest of principles, the love of their country. I cannot here forbear mentioning the famous Spanish proverb, 'If there were neither fools nor knaves in the world all people would be of one mind.'

## THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT

For my own part, I could heartily wish that all honest men would enter into an association, for the support of one another against the endeavours of those whom they ought to look upon as their common enemies, whatsoever side they may belong to. Were there such an honest body of neutral forces, we should never see the worst of men in great figures of life, because they are useful to a party; nor the best unregarded, because they are above practising those methods which would be grateful to their faction. We should then single every criminal out of the herd, and hunt him down, however formidable and overgrown he might appear: on the contrary, we should shelter distressed innocence, and defend virtue, however beset with contempt or ridicule, envy or defamation. In short, we should not any longer regard our fellow-subjects as Whigs or Tories, but should make the man of merit our friend, and the villain our enemy.

From *The Spectator*

## THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT (cont.)

*Tros Rutulusve fuat, nullo discrimine habebo.*

VIRG. *Æn.* x. 108

Rutulians, Trojans, are the same to me.

DRYDEN

In my yesterday's paper I proposed, that the honest men of all parties should enter into a kind of association for the defence of one another, and

the confusion of their common enemies. As it is designed this neutral body should act with a regard to nothing but truth and equity, and divest themselves of the little heats and prepossessions that cleave to parties of all kinds, I have prepared for them the following form of an association, which may express their intentions in the most plain and simple manner :

*We whose names are hereunto subscribed, do solemnly declare, that we do in our consciences believe two and two make four ; and that we shall adjudge any man whatsoever to be our enemy who endeavours to persuade us, to the contrary. We are likewise ready to maintain with the hazard of all that is near and dear to us, that six is less than seven in all times and all places ; and that ten will not be more three years hence than it is at present. We do also firmly declare, that it is our resolution as long as we live to call black black, and white white. And we shall upon all occasions oppose such persons that upon any day of the year shall call black white, or white black, with the utmost peril of our lives and fortunes.*

Were there such a combination of honest men, who without any regard to places would endeavour to extirpate all such furious zealots as would sacrifice one half of their country to the passion and interest of the other ; as also such infamous hypocrites, that are for promoting their own advantage under colour of the public good ; with all the profligate immoral retainers to each side,

## THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT

that have nothing to recommend them but an implicit submission to their leaders; we should soon see that furious party-spirit extinguished, which may in time expose us to the derision and contempt of all the nations about us.

A member of this society, that would thus carefully employ himself in making room for merit, by throwing down the worthless and depraved part of mankind from those conspicuous stations of life to which they have been sometimes advanced, and all this without any regard to his private interest, would be no small benefactor to his country.

I remember to have read in Diodorus Siculus an account of a very active little animal, which I think he calls *Ichneumon*, that makes it the whole business of his life to break the eggs of the crocodile, which he is always in search after. This instinct is the more remarkable, because the *Ichneumon* never feeds upon the eggs he has broken, nor in any other way finds his account in them. Were it not for the incessant labours of this industrious animal, Egypt, says the historian, would be over-run with crocodiles; for the Egyptians are so far from destroying those pernicious creatures, that they worship them as gods.

If we look into the behaviour of ordinary partisans, we shall find them far from resembling this disinterested animal; and rather acting after the example of the wild Tartars, who are ambitious of destroying a man of the most extraordinary

parts and accomplishments, as thinking that upon his decease, the same talents, whatever posts they qualified him for, enter of course into his destroyer.

As in the whole train of my speculations I have endeavoured as much as I am able to extinguish that pernicious spirit of passion and prejudice, which rages with the same violence in all parties, I am still the more desirous of doing some good in this particular, because I observe that the spirit of party reigns more in the country than in the town. It here contracts a kind of brutality and rustic fierceness, to which men of a politer conversation are wholly strangers. It extends itself even to the return of the bow and the hat; and at the same time that the heads of parties preserve towards one another an outward show of good breeding, and keep up a perpetual intercourse of civilities, their tools that are dispersed in these outlying parts will not so much as mingle together at a cock-match. This humour fills the country with several periodical meetings of Whig jockies and Tory fox-hunters; not to mention the innumerable curses, frowns, and whispers it produces at a quarter-sessions.

I do not know whether I have observed in any of my former papers, that my friends Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport are of different principles, the first of them inclined to the *landed* and the other to the *monied* interest. This humour is so moderate in each of them, that it proceeds no farther than to an agreeable raillery,

which very often diverts the rest of the club. I find however that the knight is a much stronger Tory in the country than in the town, which, as he has told me in my ear, is absolutely necessary for the keeping up his interest. In all our journey from London to his house we did not so much as bait at a Whig inn : or if by chance the coach-man stopped at a wrong place, one of Sir Roger's servants would ride up to his master at full speed, and whisper to him that the master of the house was against such an one in the last election. This often betrayed us into hard beds and bad cheer ; for we were not so inquisitive about the inn as the inn-keeper ; and provided our landlord's principles were sound, did not take any notice of the staleness of his provisions. This I found still the more inconvenient, because the better the host was, the worse generally were his accommodations ; the fellow knowing very well that those who were his friends would take up with coarse diet and hard lodging. For these reasons, all the while I was upon the road I dreaded entering into an house of any one that Sir Roger had applauded for an honest man.

Since my stay at Sir Roger's in the country, I daily find more instances of this narrow party-humour. Being upon a bowling-green at a neighbouring market-town the other day, (for that is the place where the gentlemen of one side meet once a week,) I observed a stranger among them of a better presence and genteeler behaviour than ordinary ; but was much surprised, that notwith-

standing he was a very fair better, nobody would take him up. But upon inquiry I found that he was one who had given a disagreeable vote in a former parliament, for which reason there was not a man upon that bowling-green who would have so much correspondence with him as to win his money of him.

Among other instances of this nature, I must not omit one which concerns myself. Will Wimble was the other day relating several strange stories that he had picked up, nobody knows where, of a certain great man; and upon my staring at him, as one that was surprised to hear such things in the country, which had never been so much as whispered in the town, Will stopped short in the thread of his discourse, and after dinner asked my friend Sir Roger in his ear, if he was sure that I was not a fanatic.

It gives me a serious concern to see such a spirit of dissension in the country; not only as it destroys virtue and common-sense, and renders us in a manner barbarians towards one another, but as it perpetuates our animosities, widens our breaches, and transmits our present passions and prejudices to our posterity. For my own part, I am sometimes afraid that I discover the seeds of a civil war in these our divisions; and therefore cannot but bewail, as in their first principles, the miseries and calamities of our children.

From *The Spectator*

## THE VISION OF MIRZAH

*Omnem quæ nunc obducta tuenti  
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum  
Caligat, nubem eripiam.* VIRG. *Æn.* ii. 604

Every cloud which by its veil now dims your mortal sight as you gaze, and lies damp and dark around you, I will take away.

WHEN I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met one entitled *The Visions of Mirzah*, which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them, and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word as follows.

‘On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always kept holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdad, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, “Surely,” said I, “man is but a shadow, and life a dream.” Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it



to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard ; they put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

‘I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius, and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand, directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature ; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, “Mirzah,” said he, “I have heard thee in thy soliloquies ; follow me.”

‘He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the

## THE VISION OF MIRZAH

rock, and placing me on the top of it, "Cast thy eyes eastward," said he, "and tell me what thou seest." "I see," said I, "a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it." "The valley that thou seest," said he, "is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity." "What is the reason," said I, "that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?" "What thou seest," said he, "is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now," said he, "this sea that is thus bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it." "I see a bridge," said I, "standing in the midst of the tide." "That bridge thou seest," said he, "is human life : consider it attentively." Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches ; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. "But tell me further," said he, "what thou discoverest on it." "I see multitudes of people passing over it," said I, "and a black cloud hanging on each end of it." As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping

through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon farther examination, perceived there were innumerable trapdoors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through into the tide, and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

‘There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

‘I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them, but often, when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed, and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and

others with pill-boxes, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them. •

‘The genius, seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it; “Take thine eyes off the bridge,” said he, “and tell me if thou yet seest anything thou dost not comprehend.” Upon looking up, “What mean,” said I “those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.” “These,” said the genius, “are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.”

‘I here fetched a deep sigh; “Alas,” said I, “man was made in vain! How is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!” The genius, being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. “Look no more,” said he, “on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.” I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with a supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before

too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it : but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of the fountains, or resting on beds of flowers ; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats ; but the genius told me that there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. “The islands,” said he, “that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore ; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distri-

## THE VISION OF MIRZAH

buted among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them ; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirzah, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him." I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I, "Shew me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant." The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address him a second time, but I found that he had left me ; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating ; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it.'

*The end of the first Vision of Mirzah*

*From The Spectator*

# GOLDSMITH

## THE FAME COACH

SCARCE a day passes in which we do not hear compliments paid to Dryden, Pope, and other writers of the last age, while not a month comes forward that is not loaded with invective against the writers of this. Strange, that our critics should be fond of giving their favours to those who are insensible of the obligation, and their dislike to these who, of all mankind, are most apt to retaliate the injury.

Even though our present writers had not equal merit with their predecessors, it would be politic to use them with ceremony. Every compliment paid them would be more agreeable, in proportion as they least deserved it. Tell a lady with a handsome face that she is pretty, she only thinks it her due ; it is what she has heard a thousand times before from others, and she disregards the compliment : but assure a lady, the cut of whose visage is something more plain, that she looks killing to-day, she instantly bridles up and feels the force of the well-timed flattery the whole day after. Compliments which we think are deserved, we only accept, as debts, with indifference ; but those which conscience informs us we do not merit,

## THE FAME COACH

we receive with the same gratitude that we do favours given away.

Our gentlemen, however, who preside at the distribution of literary fame, seem resolved to part with praise neither from motives of justice, or generosity ; one would think, when they take pen in hand, that it was only to blot reputations, and to put their seals to the packet which consigns every new-born effort to oblivion.

Yet, notwithstanding the republic of letters hangs at present so feebly together ; though those friendships which once promoted literary fame seem now to be discontinued ; though every writer who now draws the quill seems to aim at profit, as well as applause, many among them are probably laying in stores for immortality, and are provided with a sufficient stock of reputation to last the whole journey.

As I was indulging these reflections, in order to eke out the present page, I could not avoid pursuing the metaphor, of going a journey, in my imagination, and formed the following reverie, too wild for allegory, and too regular for a dream.

I fancied myself placed in the yard of a large inn, in which there were an infinite number of wagons and stage-coaches, attended by fellows who either invited the company to take their places, or were busied in packing their baggage. Each vehicle had its inscription, showing the place of its destination. On one I could read *The pleasure stage-coach* ; on another, *The wagon of industry* ; on a third, *The vanity whim* ; and



on a fourth, *The landau of riches*. I had some inclination to step into each of these, one after another ; but, I know not by what means, I passed them by, and at last fixed my eye upon a small carriage, berlin fashion, which seemed the most convenient vehicle at a distance in the world ; and, upon my nearer approach, found it to be *The fame machine*.

I instantly made up to the coachman, whom I found to be an affable and seemingly good-natured fellow. He informed me, that he had but a few days ago returned from the temple of fame, to which he had been carrying Addison, Swift, Pope, Steele, Congreve, and Colley Cibber ; that they made but indifferent company by the way ; and that he once or twice was going to empty his berlin of the whole cargo : ‘However,’ says he, ‘I got them all safe home with no other damage than a black eye, which Colley gave Mr. Pope, and am now returned for another coachful.’ ‘If that be all, friend,’ said I, ‘and if you are in want of company, I’ll make one with all my heart. Open the door ; I hope the machine rides easy.’ ‘Oh ! for that, sir, extremely easy.’ But still keeping the door shut, and measuring me with his eye, ‘Pray, Sir, have you no luggage ? You seem to be a good-natured sort of a gentleman ; but I don’t find you have got any luggage, and I never permit any to travel with me but such as have something valuable to pay for coach-hire.’ Examining my pockets, I own I was not a little disconcerted at this unexpected rebuff ;

but considering that I carried a number of *The Bee* under my arm, I was resolved to open it in his eyes, and dazzle him with the splendour of the page. He read the title and contents, however, without any emotion, and assured me he had never heard of it before. 'In short, friend,' said he, now losing all his former respect, 'you must not come in. I expect better passengers; but, as you seem a harmless creature, perhaps, if there be room left, I may let you ride a while for charity.'

I now took my stand by the coachman at the door, and since I could not command a seat, was resolved to be as useful as possible, and earn by my assiduity, what I could not by my merit.

The next that presented for a place, was a most whimsical figure indeed. He was hung round with papers of his own composing, not unlike those who sing ballads in the streets, and came dancing up to the door with all the confidence of instant admittance. The volubility of his motion and address prevented my being able to read more of his cargo than the word *Inspector*, which was written in great letters at the top of some of the papers. He opened the coach-door himself without any ceremony, and was just slipping in, when the coachman, with as little ceremony, pulled him back. Our figure seemed perfectly angry at this repulse, and demanded gentleman's satisfaction. 'Lord, sir!' replied the coachman, 'instead of proper luggage, by your bulk you seem loaded for a West India voyage. You are big enough, with

all your papers, to crack twenty stage-coaches. Excuse me, indeed, sir, for you must not enter.' Our figure now began to expostulate; he assured the coachman, that though his baggage seemed so bulky it was perfectly light, and that he would be contented with the smallest corner of room. But Jehu was inflexible, and the carrier of the *Inspectors* was sent to dance back again, with all his papers fluttering in the wind. We expected to have no more trouble from this quarter, when, in a few minutes, the same figure changed his appearance, like harlequin upon the stage, and with the same confidence again made his approaches, dressed in lace, and carrying nothing but a nosegay. Upon coming near, he thrust the nosegay to the coachman's nose, grasped the brass, and seemed now resolved to enter by violence. I found the struggle soon begin to grow hot, and the coachman, who was a little old, unable to continue the contest; so, in order to ingratiate myself, I stepped in to his assistance, and our united efforts sent our literary Proteus, though worsted, unconquered still, clear off, dancing a rigadon, and smelling his nosegay.

The person who after him appeared as candidate for a place in the stage, came up with an air not quite so confident, but somewhat, however, theatrical; and, instead of entering, made the coachman a very low bow, which the other returned, and desired to see his baggage, upon which he instantly produced some farces, a tragedy, and other miscellany productions. The

coachman, casting his eye upon the cargo, assured him, at present he could not possibly have a place, but hoped in time he might aspire to one, as he seemed to have read in the book of nature, without a careful perusal of which none ever found entrance at the temple of fame. 'What! (replied the disappointed poet) shall my tragedy, in which I have vindicated the cause of liberty and virtue—' 'Follow nature, (returned the other) and never expect to find lasting fame by topics which only please from their popularity. Had you been first in the cause of freedom, or praised in virtue more than an empty name, it is possible you might have gained admittance; but at present I beg, sir, you will stand aside for another gentleman whom I see approaching.'

This was a very grave personage, whom at some distance I took for one of the most reserved, and even disagreeable figures I had seen; but as he approached, his appearance improved, and when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived, that in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most good-natured countenances that could be imagined. Upon coming to open the stage door, he lifted a parcel of folios into the seat before him, but our inquisitorial coachman at once shoved them out again. 'What, not take in my dictionary!' exclaimed the other in a rage. 'Be patient, sir, (replied the coachman) I have driven a coach, man and boy, these two thousand years; but I do not remember to have carried above one dictionary during the whole time.'

That little book which I perceive peeping from one of your pockets, may I presume to ask what it contains?' 'A mere trifle, (replied the author) it is called *The Rambler*.' '*The Rambler*! (says the coachman) I beg, sir, you'll take your place; I have heard our ladies in the court of Apollo frequently mention it with rapture; and Clio, who happens to be a little grave, has been heard to prefer it to *The Spectator*; though others have observed, that the reflections, by being refined, sometimes become minute.'

This grave gentleman was scarce seated, when another, whose appearance was something more modern, seemed willing to enter, yet afraid to ask. He carried in his hand a bundle of essays, of which the coachman was curious enough to inquire the contents. 'These (replied the gentleman) are rhapsodies against the religion of my country.' 'And how can you expect to come into my coach, after thus choosing the wrong side of the question?' 'Aye, but I am right; (replied the other) and if you give me leave, I shall in a few minutes state the argument.' 'Right or wrong (said the coachman) he who disturbs religion is a blockhead, and he shall never travel in a coach of mine.' 'If then (said the gentleman, mustering up all his courage) if I am not to have admittance as an essayist, I hope I shall not be repulsed as an historian; the last volume of my history met with applause.' 'Yes, (replied the coachman) but I have heard only the first approved at the temple of fame; and as I see you have it about you, enter without

further ceremony.' My attention was now diverted to a crowd, who were pushing forward a person that seemed more inclined to the *stage-coach of riches*; but by their means he was driven forward to the same machine, which he, however, seemed heartily to despise. Impelled, however, by their solicitations, he steps up, flourishing a voluminous history, and demanding admittance. 'Sir, I have formerly heard your name mentioned (says the coachman) but never as an historian. Is there no other work upon which you may claim a place?' 'None (replied the other) except a romance; but this is a work of too trifling a nature to claim future attention.' 'You mistake (says the inquisitor), a well-written romance is no such easy task as is generally imagined. I remember formerly to have carried Cervantes and Segrais; and if you think fit, you may enter.'

Upon our three literary travellers coming into the same coach, I listened attentively to hear what might be the conversation that passed upon this extraordinary occasion; when, instead of agreeable or entertaining dialogue, I found them grumbling at each other, and each seemed discontented with his companions. Strange! thought I to myself, that they who are thus born to enlighten the world, should still preserve the narrow prejudices of childhood, and, by disagreeing, make even the highest merit ridiculous. Were the learned and the wise to unite against the dunces of society, instead of sometimes siding into opposite parties with them, they might throw a lustre upon each

other's reputation, and teach every rank of subordinate merit, if not to admire, at least not to avow dislike.

In the midst of these reflections, I perceived the coachman, unmindful of me, had now mounted the box. Several were approaching to be taken in whose pretensions I was sensible were very just. I therefore desired him to stop, and take in more passengers ; but he replied, as he had now mounted the box, it would be improper to come down ; but that he should take them all, one after the other, when he should return. So he drove away, and, for myself, as I could not get in, I mounted behind, in order to hear the conversation on the way.

From *The Bee*

## A VISIT TO WESTMINSTER ABBEY

*From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, First  
President of the Ceremonial Academy in China*

I AM just returned from Westminster Abbey, the place of sepulture for the philosophers, heroes, and kings of England. What a gloom do monumental inscriptions, and all the venerable remains of deceased merit inspire ! Imagine a temple marked with the hand of antiquity, solemn as religious awe, adorned with all the magnificence of barbarous profusion, dim windows, fretted pillars, long colonnades, and dark ceilings. Think, then, what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene. I stood in the midst of the

temple, and threw my eyes round on the walls, filled with the statues, the inscriptions, and the monuments of the dead.

Alas ! I said to myself, how does pride attend the puny child of dust even to the grave ! Even humble as I am I possess more consequence in the present scene than the greatest hero of them all : they have toiled for an hour to gain a transient immortality, and are at length retired to the grave where they have no attendant but the worm, none to flatter but the epitaph.

As I was indulging such reflections, a gentleman, dressed in black, perceiving me to be a stranger, came up, entered into conversation, and politely offered to be my instructor and guide through the temple. 'If any monument,' said he, 'should particularly excite your curiosity, I shall endeavour to satisfy your demands.' I accepted with thanks the gentleman's offer, adding, that 'I was come to observe the policy, the wisdom, and the justice of the English, in conferring rewards upon deceased merit. If adulation like this,' continued I, 'be properly conducted, as it can no ways injure those who are flattered, so it may be a glorious incentive to those who are now capable of enjoying it. It is the duty of every good government to turn this monumental pride to its own advantage ; to become strong in the aggregate from the weakness of the individual. If none but the truly great have a place in this awful repository, a temple like this will give the finest lessons of morality, and be a strong incentive to



true ambition. I am told, that none have a place here but characters of the most distinguished merit.' The man in black seemed impatient at my observations ; so I discontinued my remarks, and we walked on together to take a view of every particular monument in order as it lay.

As the eye is naturally caught by the finest objects, I could not avoid being particularly curious about one monument, which appeared more beautiful than the rest : 'that,' said I to my guide, 'I take to be the tomb of some very great man. By the peculiar excellence of the workmanship, and the magnificence of the design, this must be a trophy raised to the memory of some king, who has saved his country from ruin, or law-giver, who has reduced his fellow-citizens from anarchy into just subjection.' 'It is not requisite,' replied my companion smiling, 'to have such qualifications in order to have a very fine monument here. More humble abilities will suffice.'—'What! I suppose then, the gaining two or three battles, or the taking half a score towns, is thought a sufficient qualification?'—'Gaining battles, or taking towns,' replied the man in black, 'may be of service ; but a gentleman may have a very fine monument here without ever seeing a battle or a siege.' 'This, then, is the monument of some poet, I presume, of one whose wit has gained him immortality?'—'No, sir,' replied my guide, 'the gentleman who lies here never made verses ; and as for wit, he despised it in others, because he had none himself.' 'Pray tell me then in a word,'

said I peevishly, 'what is the great man who lies here particularly remarkable for'—'Remarkable, sir,' said my companion, 'why, sir, the gentleman that lies here is remarkable, very remarkable—for a tomb in Westminster Abbey.'—'But, head of my ancestors ! how has he got here? I fancy he could never bribe the guardians of the temple to give him a place. Should he not be ashamed to be seen among company, where even moderate merit would 'look like infamy?'—'I suppose,' replied the man in black, 'the gentleman was rich, and his friends, as is usual in such a case, told him he was great. He readily believed them ; the guardians of the temple, as they got by the self-delusion, were ready to believe him too ; so he paid his money for a fine monument ; and the workman, as you see, has made him one of the most beautiful. Think not, however, that this gentleman is singular in his desire of being buried among the great ; there are several others in the temple, who, hated and shunned by the great while alive, have come here, fully resolved to keep them company now they are dead.'

As we walked along to a particular part of the temple, 'There,' says the gentleman, pointing with his finger, 'that is the Poets' Corner ; there you see the monuments of Shakespeare, and Milton, and Prior, and Drayton.' 'Drayton !' I replied, 'I never heard of him before ; but I have been told of one Pope ; is he there?' 'It is time enough,' replied my guide, 'these hundred years, he is not long dead ; people have not done hating

him yet'. 'Strange,' cried I, 'can any be found to hate a man, whose life was wholly spent in entertaining and instructing his fellow-creatures?' 'Yes,' says my guide, 'they hate him for that very reason. There are a set of men called answerers of books, who take upon them to watch the republic of letters, and distribute reputation by the sheet. These answerers have no other employment but to cry out 'Dunce', and 'Scribbler' ; to praise the dead, and revile the living ; to grant a man of confessed abilities some small share of merit ; to applaud twenty blockheads, in order to gain the reputation of candour ; and to revile the moral character of the man whose writings they cannot injure. Such wretches are kept in pay by some mercenary bookseller, or more frequently the bookseller himself takes this dirty work off their hands, as all that is required is to be very abusive and very dull. Every poet of any genius is sure to find such enemies ; he feels, though he seems to despise, their malice ; they make him miserable here, and in the pursuit of empty fame, at last he gains solid anxiety.'

'Has this been the case with every poet I see here?' cried I. 'Yes, with every mother's son of them,' replied he, 'except he happened to be born a mandarin. If he has much money, he may buy reputation from your book answerers, as well as a monument from the guardians of the temple.'

'But are there not some men of distinguished taste, as in China, who are willing to patronize men of merit, and soften the rancour of male-

volent dulness?' 'I own there are many,' replied the man in black, 'but, alas! sir, the book-answersons crowd about them, and call themselves the writers of books, and the patron is too indolent to distinguish, thus poets are kept at a distance, while their enemies eat up all their rewards at the mandarin's table.'

Leaving this part of the temple, we made up to an iron gate, through which my companion told me we were to pass, in order to see the monuments of the kings. Accordingly I marched up without further ceremony, and was going to enter, when a person, who held the gate in his hand, told me I must pay first. I was surprised at such a demand; and asked the man, whether the people of England kept a show? whether the paltry sum he demanded was not a national reproach? whether it was not more to the honour of the country to let their magnificence or their antiquities be openly seen, than thus meanly to tax a curiosity which tended to their own honour? 'As for your questions,' replied the gate-keeper, 'to be sure they may be very right because I don't understand them; but, as for that there threepence, I farm it from one—who rents it from another—who hires it from a third—who leases it from the guardians of the temple, and we all must live.' I expected upon my paying here, to see something extraordinary, since what I had seen for nothing filled me with so much surprise: but in this I was disappointed; there was little more within than black coffins, rusty armour, tattered stan-

dards, and some few slovenly figures in wax. I was sorry I had paid, but I comforted myself by considering it would be my last payment. A person attended us, who, without once blushing, told an hundred lies ; he talked of a lady who died by pricking her finger ; of a king with a golden head, and twenty such pieces of absurdity. 'Look ye there, gentleman,' says he, pointing to an old oak chair, 'there's a curiosity for ye ; in that chair the kings of England were crowned : you see also a stone underneath, and that stone is Jacob's pillow.' I could see no curiosity either in the oak chair, or the stone : could I, indeed, behold one of the old kings of England seated in this, or Jacob's head laid upon the other, there might be something curious, in the sight ; but in the present case there was no more reason for my surprise than if I should pick a stone from their streets, and call it a curiosity, merely because one of the kings happened to tread upon it as he passed in a procession.

From hence our conductor led us through several dark walks and winding ways, uttering lies, talking to himself, and flourishing a wand which he held in his hand. He reminded me of the black magicians of Kobe. After we had been almost fatigued with a variety of objects, he at last desired me to consider attentively a certain suit of armour, which seemed to show nothing remarkable. 'This armour,' said he, 'belonged to General Monk.'—Very surprising, that a general should wear armour !—'And pray,' added he,

## VENDORS OF QUACK MEDICINES

'observe this cap, this is General Monk's cap.'—Very strange indeed, very strange, that a general should have a cap also !—'Pray, friend, what might this cap have cost originally?'—'That, Sir,' says he, 'I don't know ; but this cap is all the wages I have for my trouble.'—'A very small recompense truly,' said I. 'Not so very small,' replied he, 'for every gentleman puts some money into it, and I spend the money.'—'What, more money ! still more money !'—'Every gentleman gives something, sir.'—'I'll give thee nothing,' returned I : 'the guardians of the temple should pay you your wages, friend, and not permit you to squeeze thus from every spectator. When we pay our money at the door to see a show, we never give more as we are going out. Sure, the guardians of the temple can never think they get enough. Show me the gate ; if I stay longer, I may probably meet with more of those ecclesiastical beggars.'

Thus leaving the temple precipitately, I returned to my lodgings, in order to ruminate over what was great, and to despise what was mean, in the occurrences of the day.

*From The Citizen of the World*

## THE VENDORS OF QUACK MEDICINES AND NOSTRUMS RIDICULED

*From the same.*

WHATEVER may be the merits of the English in other sciences, they seem peculiarly excellent in

the art of healing. There is scarcely a disorder incident to humanity, against which they are not possessed with a most infallible antidote. The professors of other arts confess the inevitable intricacy of things, talk with doubt, and decide with hesitation, but doubting is entirely unknown in medicine; the advertising professors here delight in cases of difficulty: be the disorder never so desperate or radical, you will find numbers in every street, who, by levelling a pill at the part affected, promise a certain cure, without loss of time or hindrance of business.

When I consider the assiduity of this profession, their benevolence amazes me. They not only in general give their medicines for half value, but use the most persuasive remonstrances to induce the sick to come and be cured. Sure there must be something strangely obstinate in an English patient, who refuses so much health upon such easy terms. Does he take a pride in being bloated with a dropsy? does he find pleasure in the alternations of an intermittent fever? or feel as much satisfaction in nursing up his gout, as he found pleasure in acquiring it? He must, otherwise he would never reject such repeated assurances of instant relief. What can be more convincing than the manner in which the sick are invited to be well? The doctor first begs the most earnest attention of the public to what he is going to propose; he solemnly affirms the pill was never found to want success; he produces a list of those who have been rescued from the grave by taking

it. Yet, notwithstanding all this, there are many here who, now and then, think proper to be sick. Only sick, did I say? There are some who even think proper to die! Yes, by the head of Confucius! they die; though they might have purchased the health-restoring specific for half-a-crown at every corner.

I am amazed, my dear Fum Hoam, that these doctors, who know what an obstinate set of people they have to deal with, have never thought of attempting to revive the dead. When the living are found to reject their prescriptions, they ought in conscience to apply to the dead, from whom they can expect no such mortifying repulses: they would find in the dead the most complying patients imaginable; and what gratitude might they not expect from the patient's son, now no longer an heir, and his wife, now no longer a widow!

Think not, my friend, that there is anything chimerical in such an attempt; they already perform cures equally strange. What can be more truly astonishing than to see old age restored to youth, and vigour to the most feeble constitutions? Yet this is performed here every day: a simple electuary effects these wonders, even without the bungling ceremonies of having the patient boiled up in a kettle, or ground down in a mill.

Few physicians here go through the ordinary courses of education, but receive all their knowledge of medicine by immediate inspiration from heaven. Some are thus inspired even in the



womb ; and, what is very remarkable, understand their profession as well at three years old as at three score. Others have spent a great part of their lives unconscious of any latent excellence, till a bankruptcy, or a residence in jail, have called their miraculous powers into exertion. And others still there are indebted to their superlative ignorance alone for success : the more ignorant the practitioner, the less capable is he thought of deceiving. The people here judge as they do in the east ; where it is thought absolutely requisite that a man should be an idiot before he pretend to be either a conjuror or a doctor.

When a physician by inspiration is sent for, he never perplexes the patient by previous examination ; he asks very few questions, and those only for form sake. He knows every disorder by intuition ; he administers the pill or drop for every distemper ; nor is more inquisitive than the farrier while he drenches a horse. If the patient lives, then has he one more to add to the surviving list ; if he dies, then it may be justly said of the patient's disorder, that, 'as it was not cured, the disorder was incurable.'

From *The Citizen of the World*

## THE DISTRESSES OF A COMMON SOLDIER

No observation is more common, and at the same time more true, than that one half of the world

## THE DISTRESSES OF A COMMON SOLDIER

are ignorant how the other half lives. The misfortunes of the great are held up to engage our attention ; are enlarged upon in tones of declamation ; and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers : the great, under the pressure of calamity, are conscious of several others sympathising with their distress ; and have, at once, the comfort of admiration and pity.

There is nothing magnanimous in bearing misfortunes with fortitude, when the whole world is looking on : men in such circumstances will act bravely even from motives of vanity ; but he who, in the vale of obscurity, can brave adversity ; who, without friends to encourage, acquaintances to pity, or even without hope to alleviate his misfortunes, can behave with tranquillity and indifference, is truly great : whether peasant or courtier, he deserves admiration, and should be held up for our imitation and respect.

While the slightest inconveniences of the great are magnified into calamities ; while tragedy mouths out their sufferings in all the strains of eloquence, the miseries of the poor are entirely disregarded ; and yet some of the lower ranks of people undergo more real hardships in one day, than those of a more exalted station suffer in their whole lives. It is inconceivable what difficulties the meanest of our common sailors and soldiers endure without murmuring or regret ; without passionately declaiming against Providence, or calling their fellows to be gazers on their intrepidity. Every day is to them a day of misery,

and yet they entertain their hard fate without repining.

With what indignation do I hear an Ovid, a Cicero, or a Rabutin, complain of their misfortunes and hardships, whose greatest calamity was that of being unable to visit a certain spot of earth, to which they had foolishly attached an idea of happiness. Their distresses were pleasures, compared to what many of the adventuring poor every day endure without murmuring. They ate, drank, and slept; they had slaves to attend them, and were sure of subsistence for life: while many of their fellow creatures are obliged to wander without a friend to comfort or assist them, and even without shelter from the severity of the season.

I have been led into these reflections from accidentally meeting, some days ago, a poor fellow, whom I knew when a boy, dressed in a sailor's jacket, and begging at one of the outlets of the town, with a wooden leg. I knew him to have been honest and industrious when in the country, and was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation. Wherefore, after giving him what I thought proper, I desired to know the history of his life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier, for such he was, though dressed in a sailor's habit, scratching his head, and leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude to comply with my request, and gave me his history as follows:

## THE DISTRESSES OF A COMMON SOLDIER

‘As for my misfortunes, master, I can’t pretend to have gone through any more than other folks ; for, except the loss of my limb, and my being obliged to beg, I don’t know any reason, thank Heaven, that I have to complain, there is. Bill Tibbs, of our regiment, he has lost both his legs, and an eye to boot ; but, thank Heaven, it is not so bad with me yet.

‘I was born in Shropshire, my father was a labourer, and died when I was five years old ; so I was put upon the parish. As he had been a wandering sort of man, the parishioners were not able to tell to what parish I belonged, or where I was born, so they sent me to another parish, and that parish sent me to a third. I thought in my heart, they kept sending me about so long, that they would not let me be born in any parish at all ; but, at last, however, they fixed me. I had some disposition to be a scholar, and was resolved, at least to know my letters ; but the master of the workhouse put me to business as soon as I was able to handle a mallet ; and here I lived an easy kind of a life for five years. I only worked ten hours in the day, and had my meat and drink provided for my labour. It is true, I was not suffered to stir out of the house, for fear, as they said, I should run away ; but what of that, I had the liberty of the whole house, and the yard before the door, and that was enough for me. I was then bound out to a farmer, where I was up both early and late ; but I ate and drank well, and liked my business well enough, till he

died, when I was obliged to provide for myself ; so I was resolved to go seek my fortune.

‘In this manner I went from town to town, worked when I could get employment, and starved when I could get none ; when happening one day to go through a field belonging to a justice of peace, I spied a hare crossing the path just before me ; and I believe the devil put it in my head to fling my stick at it.—Well, what will you have on’t? I killed the hare, and was bringing it away, when the justice himself met me : he called me a poacher and a villain ; and collaring me, desired I would give an account of myself : I fell upon my knees, begged his worship’s pardon, and began to give a full account of all that I knew of my breed, seed, and generation ; but though I gave a very true account, the justice said I could give no account ; so I was indicted at sessions, found guilty of being poor, and sent up to London to Newgate, in order to be transported as a vagabond.

‘People may say this and that of being in jail ; but, for my part, I found Newgate as agreeable a place as ever I was in all my life. I had enough to eat and drink, and did no work at all. This kind of life was too good to last for ever ; so I was taken out of prison, after five months, put on board a ship, and sent off, with two hundred more, to the plantations. We had but an indifferent passage, for, being all confined in the hold, more than a hundred of our people died for want of sweet air ; and those that remained were sickly

enough, God knows. When we came ashore, we were sold to the planters,—and I was bound for seven years more. As I was no scholar, for I did not know my letters, I was obliged to work among the negroes ; and I served out my time, as in duty bound to do.

‘When my time was expired, I worked my passage home, and glad I was to see Old England again, because I loved my country. I was afraid, however, that I should be indicted for a vagabond once more, so did not much care to go down into the country, but kept about the town, and did little jobs when I could get them.

‘I was very happy in this manner for some time, till one evening, coming home from work, two men knocked me down, and then desired me to stand. They belonged to a press-gang : I was carried before the justice, and, as I could give no account of myself, I had my choice left, whether to go on board a man-of-war, or list for a soldier. I chose the latter ; and, in this post of a gentleman, I served two campaigns in Flanders, was at the battles of Val and Fontenoy, and received but one wound, through the breast here ; but the doctor of our regiment soon made me well again.

‘When the peace came on I was discharged ; and as I could not work, because my wound was sometimes troublesome, I listed for a landman in the East India Company’s service. I here fought the French in six pitched battles ; and I verily believe, that if I could read or write, our captain would have made me a corporal. But it was not

my good fortune to have any promotion, for I soon fell sick, and so got leave to return home again with forty pounds in my pocket. This was at the beginning of the present war, and I hoped to be set on shore, and to have the pleasure of spending my money ; but the Government wanted men, and so I was pressed for a sailor before ever I could set foot on shore.

'The boatswain found me, as he said, an obstinate fellow: he swore he knew that I understood my business well, but that I shammed Abraham, to be idle ; but God knows, I knew nothing of sea business, and he beat me without considering what he was about. I had still, however, my forty pounds, and that was some comfort to me under every beating ; and the money I might have had to this day, but that our ship was taken by the French, and so I lost all.

'Our crew was carried into Brest, and many of them died, because they were not used to live in jail ; but, for my part, it was nothing to me, for I was seasoned. One night, as I was sleeping on the bed of boards, with a warm blanket about me, for I always loved to lie well, I was awakened by the boatswain, who had a dark lantern in his hand ; "Jack," says he to me, "will you knock out the French sentries' brains?" "I don't care," says I, striving to keep myself awake, "if I lend a hand." "Then follow me," says he, "and I hope we shall do business." So up I got, and tied my blanket, which was all the clothes I had, about my middle, and went with him to fight the Frenchmen.

## THE DISTRESSES OF A COMMON SOLDIER

I hate the French because they are all slaves, and wear wooden shoes.

‘Though we had no arms, one Englishman is able to beat five French at any time ; so we went down to the door, where both the sentries were posted, and rushing upon them, seized their arms in a moment, and knocked them down. From thence, nine of us ran together to the quay, and seizing the first boat we met, got out of the harbour and put to sea. We had not been here three days before we were taken up by the *Dorset* privateer, who were glad of so many good hands ; and we consented to run our chance. However, we had not as much luck as we expected. In three days we fell in with the *Pompadour* privateer, of forty guns, while we had but twenty-three ; so to it we went, yard-arm and yard-arm. The fight lasted for three hours, and I verily believe we should have taken the Frenchman, had we but had some more men left behind ; but, unfortunately, we lost all our men just as we were going to get the victory.

‘I was once more in the power of the French, and I believe it would have gone hard with me, had I been brought back to Brest ; but, by good fortune, we were retaken by the *Viper*. I had almost forgot to tell you, that, in that engagement, I was wounded in two places : I lost four fingers of the left hand, and my leg was shot off. If I had had the good fortune to have lost my leg and use of my hand on board a king’s ship, and not aboard a privateer, I should have been entitled



to clothing and maintenance during the rest of my life ; but that was not my chance : one man is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and another with a wooden ladle. However, blessed be God, I enjoy good health, and will for ever love liberty and Old England. Liberty,\* property, and Old England, for ever, huzza !'

Thus saying, he limped off, leaving me in admiration at his intrepidity and content ; nor could I avoid acknowledging, that an habitual acquaintance with misery serves better than philosophy to teach us to despise it.

From Goldsmith's *Essays*

# COBBETT

## ON PUTTING SENTENCES TOGETHER AND ON FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

MY DEAR JAMES,—I have now done with the subject of grammar, which, as you know, teaches us to use *words* in a proper manner. But though you now, I hope, understand how to avoid error in the forming of sentences, I think it right not to conclude my instructions without saying a few words upon the subject of adding sentence to sentence, and on the subject of *figurative language*.

Language is made use of for one of three purposes ; namely, to *inform*, to *convince*, or to *persuade*. The first, requiring merely the talent of telling what we know, is a matter of little difficulty. The second demands *reasoning*. The third, besides reasoning, demands all the aid that we can obtain from the use of figures of speech, or, as they are sometimes called, *figures of rhetoric*, which last word means, the power of persuasion.

Whatever may be the purpose for which we use language, it seldom can happen that we do not stand in need of more than one sentence ; and, therefore, others must be added. There is no precise *rule* ; there can be no precise rule, with regard to the manner of doing this. When we

have said one thing, we must add another ; and so on, until we have said all that we have to say. But, we ought to take care, and great care, that if any words in a sentence relate, in any way, to words that have *gone before*, we make these words correspond grammatically with those foregoing words.

The *order* of the matter will be, in almost all cases, that of your thoughts. Sit down to *write what you have thought*, and not to *think what you shall write*. Use the first words that occur to you, and never attempt to *alter a thought* ; for, that which has come of itself into your mind is likely to pass into that of another more readily and with more effect than anything which you can, by reflection, invent.

Never stop to *make choice of words*. Put down your thought in words just as they come. Follow the order which your thought will point out ; and it will push you on to get it upon the paper as quickly and as clearly as possible.

Thoughts come much faster than we can put them upon paper. They produce one another ; and this order of their coming is, in almost every case, the best possible order that they can have on paper : yet, if you have several in your mind, rising above each other in point of force, the most forcible will naturally come the last upon paper.

Mr. Lindley Murray gives *rules* about *long sentences* and *short sentences*, and about a *due mixture* of long and short ; and he also gives rules about the *letters* that sentences should *begin* with,

and the *syllables* that they should *end* with. Such rules might be very well if we were to *sing* our writing ; but, when the use of writing is to *inform*, to *convince*, or to *persuade*, what can it have to do with such rules? •

There are certain *connecting words*, which it is of importance to use properly : such as *therefore*, which means *for that cause*, *for that reason*. We must take care, when we use such words, that there is *occasion for using them*. We must take care, that when we use *but*, or *for*, or any other connecting word, the sense of our sentences requires such word to be used ; for, if such words be improperly used, they throw all into confusion. The adverbs *when*, *then*, *while*, *now*, *there*, and some others, are connecting words, and not used, in their strictly literal sense. For example : 'Well, *then*, I will not do it.' *Then*, in its literal sense, means, *at that time*, or *in that time* : as, 'I was in America *then*.' But 'Well, *then*,' means, 'Well, *if that be so*,' or '*let that be so*,' or '*in that case*'. You have only to accustom yourself a little to reflect on the *meaning* of these words ; for that will soon teach you never to employ them improperly.

A writing, or written discourse, is generally broken into *paragraphs*. When a new paragraph should begin, the nature of your thoughts must tell you. The propriety of it will be pointed out to you by the difference between the thoughts which are coming and those which have gone before. It is impossible to frame rules for regulat-

ing such division. When a man divides his work into Parts, Books, Chapters, and Sections, he makes the division according to that which the matter has taken in his mind ; and, when he comes to write, he has no other guide for the distribution of his matter into sentences and paragraphs.

*Never write about any matter that you do not well understand.* If you clearly understand all about your matter, you will never want thoughts, and thoughts instantly become words.

One of the greatest of all faults in writing and in speaking is this ; the using of many words to *say little*. In order to guard yourself against this fault, enquire what is the *substance*, or *amount*, of what you have said. Take a long speech of some talking Lord, and put down upon paper what the amount of it is. You will most likely find that the *amount* is very small ; but, at any rate, when you get it, you will then be able to examine it, and to tell what it is worth. A very few examinations of this sort will so frighten you, that you will be for ever after upon your guard against *talking a great deal* and *saying little*.

*Figurative language* is very fine when properly employed ; but, figures of rhetoric are edge-tools and two-edge tools too. Take care how you touch them ! They are called *figures*, because they represent other things than the words in their literal meaning stand for. For instance : 'The tyrants oppress and starve the people. The

people would live amidst abundance, if those cormorants did not devour the fruit of their labour.' I shall only observe to you upon this subject, that if you use figures of rhetoric, you ought to take care that they do not make nonsense of what you say ; nor excite the ridicule of those to whom you write. Mr. Murray, in an address to his students, tells them, that he is about to offer them some advice with regard to their 'future *walks* in the *paths* of literature.' Now, though a man may *take a walk along a path*, a walk means also *the ground* laid out in a certain shape, and such a walk *is wider than a path*. He, in another part of this address, tells them, that they are in the *morning* of life and that that is the *season* for exertion. The morning, my dear James, is *not, a season*. The *year*, indeed, has seasons, but the day has none. If he had said the *spring* of life, then he might have added the *season* of exertion. I told you they were *edge-tools*. Beware of them.

I am now, my dear Son, arrived at the last paragraph of my treatise, and I hope, that when you arrive at it, you will understand grammar sufficiently to enable you to write without committing frequent and glaring errors. I shall now leave you, for about four months, to read and write English ; to practise what you have now been taught. At the end of those four months I shall have prepared a grammar to teach you the *French Language*, which language I hope to hear you speak, and to see you write well, at the end of one year from this time. With English and

French on your tongue and in your pen, you have a resource, not only greatly valuable in itself, but a resource that you can be deprived of by none of those changes and chances which deprive men of pecuniary possessions, and which, in some cases, make the purse-proud man of yesterday a crawling sycophant today. Health, without which life is not worth having, you will hardly fail to secure by early rising, exercise, sobriety, and abstemiousness as to food. Happiness, or misery, is in the *mind*. It is the mind that lives ; and the length of life ought to be measured by the number and importance of our ideas ; and not by the number of our days. Never, therefore, esteem men merely on account of their riches or their station. Respect goodness, find it where you may. Honour talent wherever you behold it unassociated with vice ; but, honour it most when accompanied with exertion, and especially when exerted in the cause of truth and justice ; and, above all things, hold it in honour, when it steps forward to protect defenceless innocence against the attacks of powerful guilt.

From *A Grammar of the English Language*, 1818

## COURTSHIP

WHEN I first saw my wife, she was *thirteen years old*, and I was within about a month of *twenty-one*. She was the daughter of a Sergeant of

artillery, and I was the Sergeant Major of a regiment of foot, both stationed in forts near the city of St. John, in the Province of New Brunswick. I sat in the same room with her, for about an hour, in company with others, and I made up my mind that she was the very girl for me. That I thought her beautiful is certain, for that I had always said should be an indispensable qualification; but I saw in her what I deemed marks of that sobriety of *conduct* of which I have said so much, and which has been by far the greatest blessing of my life. It was now dead of winter, and, of course, the snow several feet deep on the ground, and the weather piercing cold. It was my habit, when I had done my morning's writing, to go out at break of day to take a walk on a hill at the foot of which our barracks lay. In about three mornings after I had first seen her, I had, by an invitation to breakfast with me, got up two young men to join me in my walk; and our road lay by the house of her father and mother. It was hardly light, but she was out on the snow, scrubbing out a washing-tub. 'That's the girl for me,' said I, when we had got out of her hearing. One of these young men came to England soon afterwards, and he, who keeps an inn in Yorkshire, came over to Preston, at the time of the election, to verify whether I were the same man. When he found that I was, he appeared surprised; but what was his surprise when I told him that those tall young men, whom he saw around me, were the *sons* of that pretty little girl



that he and I saw scrubbing out the washing-tub on the snow in New Brunswick at day-break in the morning !

From the day that I first spoke to her, I never had a thought of her ever being the wife of any other man, more than I had a thought of her being transformed into a chest of drawers ; and I formed my resolution at once, to marry her as soon as we could get permission, and to get out of the army as soon as I could. So that this matter was, at once, settled as firmly as if written in the book of fate. At the end of about six months, my regiment, and I along with it, were removed to Frederickton, a distance of a *hundred miles*, up the river of St. John ; and, which was worse, the artillery were expected to go off to England a year or two before our regiment ! The artillery went, and she along with them ; and now it was that I acted a part becoming a real and sensible lover. I was aware, that, when she got to that gay place *Woolwich*, the house of her father and mother, necessarily visited by numerous persons not the most select, might become unpleasant to her, and I did not like, besides, that she should continue to *work hard*. I had saved a *hundred and fifty guineas*, the earnings of my early hours, in writing for the paymaster, the quartermaster, and others, in addition to the savings of my own pay. I *sent her all my money* before she sailed ; and wrote to her to beg of her, if she found her home uncomfortable, to hire a lodging with respectable people : and, at any rate, not to spare the money by any means, but to

buy herself good clothes, and to live without hard work, until I arrived in England ; and I, in order to induce her to lay out the money, told her that I should get plenty more before I came home.

As the malignity of the devil would have it, we were kept abroad *two years longer* than our time, *Mr. Pitt* (England not being so tame then as she is now) having knocked up a dust with Spain about Nootka Sound. Oh, how I cursed Nootka Sound, and poor bawling Pitt too, I am afraid ! At the end of *four years*, however, home I came ; landed at Portsmouth, and got my discharge from the army by the great kindness of poor *Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, who was then the Major of my regiment. I found my little girl a *servant of all work* (and hard work it was), at *five pounds a year*, in the house of a *Captain Brisac* ; and, without hardly saying a word about the matter, she put into my hands *the whole of my hundred and fifty guineas unbroken !*

Need I tell the reader what my feelings were ? Need I tell kind-hearted English parents what effect this anecdote *must* have produced on the minds of our children ? Need I attempt to describe what effect this example ought to have on every young woman who shall do me the honour to read this book ? Admiration of her conduct, and self-gratulation on this indubitable proof of the soundness of my own judgement, were now added to my love of her beautiful person.

Now, I do not say that there are not many young women of this country who would, under

similar circumstances, have acted as my wife did in this case ; on the contrary, I hope, and do sincerely believe, that there are. But when *her age* is considered ; when we reflect that she was living in a place crowded, literally *crowded*, with gaily dressed and handsome young men, many of whom really far richer and in higher rank than I was, and scores\* of them ready to offer her their hand ; when we reflect that she was living amongst young women who put upon their backs every shilling that they could come at ; when we see her keeping the bag of gold untouched, and working hard to provide herself with but mere necessary apparel, and doing this while she was passing from *fourteen to eighteen years of age* ; when we view the whole of the circumstances, we must say that here is an example, which, while it reflects honour on her sex, ought to have weight with every young woman whose eyes or ears this relation shall reach.

From *Advice to Young Men* 1829-30

## AN IDYLL OF NEW BRUNSWICK

THE Province of New Brunswick, in North America, in which I passed my years from the age of eighteen to that of twenty-six, consists, in general, of heaps of rocks, in the interstices of which grow the pine, the spruce, and various sorts of fir trees, or, where the woods have been burnt down, the bushes of the raspberry or those of the huckleberry. The province is cut asunder length-

wise, by a great river, called the St. John, about two hundred miles in length and, at half way from the mouth, full a mile wide. Into this main river run innumerable small rivers, there called *creeks*. On the sides of these creeks the land is, in places, clear of rocks ; it is, in these places, generally good and productive ; the trees that grow here are the birch, the maple, and others of the deciduous class ; natural meadows here and there present themselves ; and some of these spots far surpass in rural beauty any other that my eyes ever beheld ; the creeks, abounding towards their sources in waterfalls of endless variety, as well in form as in magnitude, and always teeming with fish, while water fowl enliven their surface, and while wild pigeons of the gayest plumage flutter in thousands upon thousands amongst the branches of the beautiful trees, which sometimes for miles together form an arch over the creeks.

I, in one of my rambles in the woods, in which I took great delight, came to a spot at a very short distance from the source of one of these creeks. Here was everything to delight the eye, and especially of one like me, who seem to have been born to love rural life and trees and plants of all sorts. Here were about two hundred acres of natural meadow, interspersed with patches of maple trees in various forms and of various extent ; the creek (there about thirty miles from its point of joining the St. John) ran down the middle of the spot, which formed a sort of dish, the high and rocky hills rising all round it, except at the

outlet of the creek, and these hills crowned with lofty pines : in the hills were the sources of the creek, the waters of which came down in cascades, for any one of which many a nobleman in England would, if he could transfer it, give a good slice of his fertile estate ; and in the creek, at the foot of the cascades, there were, in the season, salmon the finest in the world, and so abundant, and so easily taken, as to be used for manuring the land.

If nature, in her very best humour, had made a spot for the express purpose of captivating me, she could not have exceeded the efforts which she had here made. But I found something here besides these rude works of nature ; I found something in the fashioning of which *man* had had something to do. I found a large and well-built log dwelling house, standing (in the month of September) on the edge of a very good field of Indian corn, by the side of which there was a piece of buck-wheat just then mowed. I found a homestead, and some very pretty cows. I found all the things by which an easy and happy farmer is surrounded : and I found still something besides all these ; something that was destined to give me a great deal of pleasure and also a great deal of pain, both in their extreme degree ; and both of which, in spite of the lapse of forty years, now make an attempt to rush back into my heart.

Partly from misinformation, and partly from miscalculation, I had lost my way ; and quite alone, but armed with my sword and a brace of pistols,

to defend myself against the bears, I arrived at the log-house in the middle of a moonlight night, the hoar frost covering the trees and the grass. A stout and clamorous dog, kept off by the gleaming of my sword, waked the master of the house, who got up, received me with great hospitality, got me something to eat, and put me into a feather-bed, a thing that I had been a stranger to for some years. I, being very tired, had tried to pass the night in the woods, between the trunks of two large trees, which had fallen side by side, and within a yard of each other. I had made a nest for myself of dry fern, and had made a covering by laying boughs of spruce across the trunks of the trees. But unable to sleep on account of the cold; becoming sick from the great quantity of water that I had drunk during the heat of the day, and being, moreover, alarmed at the noise of the bears, and lest one of them should find me in a defenceless state, I had roused myself up, and had crept along as well as I could. So that no hero of eastern romance ever experienced a more enchanting change.

I had got into the house of one of those *Yankee Loyalists* who, at the close of the revolutionary war (which, until it had succeeded, was called a rebellion), had accepted of grants of land in the King's Province of New Brunswick; and who, to the great honour of England, had been furnished with all the means of making new and comfortable settlements. I was suffered to sleep till breakfast time, when I found a table, the like

of which I have since seen so many in the United States, loaded with good things. The master and the mistress of the house, aged about fifty, were like what an English farmer and his wife were half a century ago. There were two sons, tall and stout, who appeared to have come in from work, and the youngest of whom was about my age, then twenty-three. But there was *another member* of the family, aged nineteen, who (dressed according to the neat and simple fashion of New England, whence she had come with her parents five or six years before) had her long light-brown hair twisted nicely up, and fastened on the top of her head, in which head were a pair of lively blue eyes, associated with features of which that softness and that sweetness, so characteristic of American girls, were the predominant expressions, the whole being set off by a complexion indicative of glowing health, and forming, figure, movements, and all taken together, an assemblage of beauties far surpassing any that I had ever seen but *once* in my life. That *once* was, too, *two years ago* ; and, in such a case and at such an age, two years, two whole years, is a long, long while ! It was a space as long as the eleventh part of my then life ! Here was the *present* against the *absent* : here was the power of the eyes pitted against that of the *memory* : here were all the senses up in arms to subdue the influence of the thoughts : here was vanity, here was passion, here was the spot of all spots in the world, and here were also the life, and the manners and the

habits and the pursuits that I delighted in : here was everything that imagination can conceive, united in a conspiracy against the poor little brunette in England ! What, then, did I fall in love at once with this bouquet of lilies and roses ? Oh ! by no means. I was, however, so enchanted with *the place* ; I so much enjoyed its tranquillity, the shade of the maple trees, the business of the farm, the sports of the water and of the woods, that I stayed at it to the last possible minute, promising, at my departure, to come again as often as I possibly could ; a promise which I most punctually fulfilled.

Winter is the great season for jaunting and *dancing* (called *frollicking*) in America. In this Province the river and the creeks were the only *roads* from settlement to settlement. In summer we travelled in *canoes* ; in winter in *sleighs* on the ice or snow. During more than two years I spent all the time I could with my Yankee friends : they were all fond of me : I talked to them about country affairs, my evident delight in which they took as a compliment to themselves : the father and mother treated me as one of their children ; the sons as a brother ; and the daughter, who was as modest and as full of sensibility as she was beautiful, in a way to which a chap much less sanguine than I was would have given the tenderest interpretation ; which treatment I, especially in the last-mentioned case, most cordially repaid.

It is when you meet in company with others of your own age that you are, in love matters, put



most frequently to the test, and exposed to detection. The next door neighbour might, in that country, be ten miles off. We used to have a frolic, sometimes at one house and sometimes at another. Here, where female eyes are very much on the alert, no secret can long be kept ; and very soon father, mother, brothers and the whole neighbourhood looked upon the thing as certain, not excepting herself, to whom I, however, had never once even talked of marriage, and had never even told her that I *loved* her. But I had a thousand times done these by *implication*, taking into view the interpretation that she would naturally put upon my looks, appellations, and acts ; and it was of this that I had to accuse myself. Yet I was not a *deceiver* ; for my affection for her was very great : I spent no really pleasant hours but with her : I was uneasy if she showed the slightest regard for any other young man : I was unhappy if the smallest matter affected her health or spirits : I quitted her in dejection, and returned to her with eager delight : many a time, when I could get leave but for a day, I paddled in a canoe two whole succeeding nights, in order to pass that day with her. If this was not love, it was first cousin to it ; for as to any *criminal* intention I no more thought of it, in her case, than if she had been my sister. Many times I put to myself the questions : ‘What am I at ? Is not this wrong ? *Why do I go ?*’ But still I went.

Then, further in my excuse, my *prior engagement*, though carefully left unalluded to by both

parties, was, in that thin population, and owing to the singular circumstances of it, and to the great talk that there always was about me, *perfectly well known* to her and all her family. It was matter of so much notoriety and conversation in the Province, that *General Carleton* (brother of the late Lord Dorchester), who was the Governor when I was there, when he, about fifteen years afterwards, did me the honour, on his return to England, to come and see me at my house in Duke Street, Westminster, asked, before he went away, to see my *wife*, of whom *he had heard so much* before her marriage. So that here was no *deception* on my part : but still I ought not to have suffered even the most distant hope to be entertained by a person so innocent, so amiable, for whom I had so much affection, and to whose heart I had no right to give a single twinge. I ought, from the very first, to have prevented the possibility of her ever feeling pain on my account. I was young, to be sure ; but I was old enough to know what was my duty in this case, and I ought, dismissing my own feelings, to have had the resolution to perform it.

The *last parting* came ; and now came my just punishment ! The time was known to everybody, and was irrevocably fixed ; for I had to move with a regiment, and the embarkation of a regiment is an *epoch* in a thinly settled province. To describe this parting would be too painful even at this distant day, and with this frost of age upon my head. The kind and virtuous father came forty

miles to see me, just as I was going on board in the river. *His* looks and words I have never forgotten. As the vessel descended, she passed the mouth of *that creek* which I had so often entered with delight; and though England, and all that England contained, were before me, I lost sight of this creek with an aching heart.

On what trifles turn the great events in the life of man! If I had received a *cool* letter from my intended wife; if I had only heard a rumour of any thing from which fickleness in her might have been inferred, if I had found in her any, even the smallest, abatement of affection; if she had but let go any one of the hundred strings by which she held my heart: if any of these, never would the world have heard of me. Young as I was; able as I was as a soldier; proud as I was of the admiration and commendation of which I was the object; fond as I was, too, of the command which, at so early an age, my rare conduct and great natural talents had given me; sanguine as was my mind, and brilliant as were my prospects: yet I had seen so much of the meannesses, the unjust partialities, the insolent pomposity, the disgusting dissipations of that way of life, that I was weary of it: I longed, exchanging my fine laced coat for the Yankee farmer's home-spun, to be where I should never behold the supple crouch of servility, and never hear the hectoring voice of authority, again; and, on the lonely banks of this branch-covered creek, which contained (she out of the question) every thing congenial to my taste

## DOMESTIC HAPPINESS

and dear to my heart, I, unapplauded, unfeared, unenvied and uncalumniated, should have lived and died.

From *Advice to Young Men*

## DOMESTIC HAPPINESS

I BEGAN my young marriage days in and near Philadelphia. At one of those times to which I have just alluded, in the middle of the burning hot month of July, I was greatly afraid of fatal consequences to my wife for want of sleep, she not having, after the great danger was over, had any sleep for more than forty-eight hours. All great cities, in hot countries, are, I believe, full of dogs; and they, in the very hot weather, keep up, during the night, a horrible barking and fighting and howling. Upon the particular occasion to which I am adverting, they made a noise so terrible and so unremitted that it was next to impossible that even a person in full health and free from pain should obtain a minute's sleep. I was, about nine in the evening, sitting by the bed: 'I do think,' said she, 'that I could go to sleep *now*, if it were not *for the dogs*.' Downstairs I went, and out I sallied, in my shirt and trousers, and without shoes and stockings; and, going to a heap of stones lying beside the road, set to work upon the dogs, going backward and forward, and keeping them at two or three hundred yards' distance from the house. I walked thus the whole night, barefooted, lest the noise of my shoes might

possibly reach her ears ; and I remember that the bricks of the causeway were, even in the night, so hot as to be disagreeable to my feet. My exertions produced the desired effect : a sleep of several hours was the consequence ; and at eight o'clock in the morning off went I to a day's business, which was to end at six in the evening.

Women are all patriots of the soil ; and when her neighbours used to ask my wife whether *all* English husbands were like hers, she boldly answered in the affirmative. I had business to occupy the whole of my time, Sundays and week-days, except sleeping hours ; but I used to make time to assist her in the taking care of her baby, and in all sorts of things : get up, light her fire, boil her tea-kettle, carry her up warm water in cold weather, take the child while she dressed herself and got the breakfast ready, then breakfast, get her in water and wood for the day, then dress myself neatly, and sally forth to my business. The moment that was over I used to hasten back to her again ; and I no more thought of spending a moment *away from her*, unless business compelled me, than I thought of quitting the country and going to sea. The *thunder* and *lightning* are tremendous in America, compared with what they are in England. My wife was, at one time, very much afraid of thunder and lightning ; and as is the feeling of all such women, and, indeed, all men too, she wanted company, and particularly her husband, in those times of danger. I knew well, of course, that my presence would not diminish the danger ;

but, be I at what I might, if within reach of home, I used to quit my business and hasten to her, the moment I perceived a thunderstorm approaching. Scores of miles have I, first and last, *run* on this errand, in the streets of Philadelphia ! The Frenchmen, who were my scholars, used to laugh at me exceedingly on this account ; and sometimes, when I was making an appointment with them, they would say, with a smile and a bow, '*sauve la tonnerre toujours, Monsieur Cobbett*'. . . .

For about two or three years after I was married I, retaining some of my military manners, used, both in France and America, to *romp* most famously with the girls that came in my way ; till one day, at Philadelphia, my wife said to me, in a very gentle manner, 'Don't do that : *I do not like it.*' That was quite enough : I had never *thought* on the subject before : one hair of her head was more dear to me than all the other women in the world, and this I knew that she knew ; but I now saw that this was not all that she had a right to from me ; I saw that she had the further claim upon me that I should abstain from everything that might induce others to believe that there was any other woman for whom, even if I were at liberty, I had any affection. I beseech young married men to bear this in mind ; for on some trifle of this sort the happiness or misery of a long life frequently turns.

Till I had a second child, no servant ever entered my house, though well able to keep one ; and never, in my whole life, did I live in a house

so clean, in such trim order, and never have I eaten or drunk, or slept or dressed, in a manner so perfectly to my fancy as I did then. I had a great deal of business to attend to, that took me a great part of the day from home ; but, whenever I could spare a minute from business, the child was in my arms ; I rendered the mother's labour as light as I could ; any bit of food satisfied me ; when watching was necessary, we shared it between us ; and that famous *Grammar* for teaching French people English, which has been for thirty years, and still is, the great work of this kind, throughout all America, and in every nation in Europe, was written by me in hours not employed in business, and, in great part, during my share of the night-watchings over a sick and then only child, who, after lingering many months, died in my arms. . . .

*Love* came and rescued me from this state of horrible slavery (the military life) ; placed the whole of my time at my own disposal ; made me as free as air ; removed every restraint upon the operations of my mind, naturally disposed to communicate its thoughts to others ; and gave me, for my leisure hours, a companion, who, though deprived of all opportunity of acquiring what is called *learning*, had so much good sense, so much useful knowledge, was so innocent, so just in all her ways, so pure in thought, word and deed, so disinterested, so generous, so devoted to me and her children, so free from all disguise, and, withal, so beautiful and so talkative, and in a voice so

sweet, so cheering, that I must, seeing the health and the capacity which it had pleased God to give me, have been a *criminal*, if I had done much less than that which I have done ; and I have always said that, if my country feel any gratitude for my labours, that gratitude is due to her full as much as to me . . .

*Born* and bred up in the sweet air myself, I was resolved that my children should be bred up in it too. Enjoying rural scenes and sports, as I had done, when a boy, as much as anyone that ever was born, I was resolved that they should have the same enjoyments tendered to them. When I was a very little boy, I was, in the barley-sowing season, going along by the side of a field near *Waverley Abbey*, the primroses and blue-bells bespangling the banks on both sides of me ; a thousand linnets singing in a spreading oak over my head ; while the jingle of the traces and the whistling of the ploughboys saluted my ear from over the hedge ; and, as it were to snatch me from the enchantment, the hounds at that instant, having started a hare in the hanger on the other side of the field, came up scampering over it in full cry, taking me after them many a mile. I was not more than eight years old ; but this particular scene has presented itself to my mind many times every year from that day to this. I always enjoy it over again ; and I was resolved to give, if possible, the same enjoyments to my children.



## ON SHOOTING

THE great business of life in the country, appertains, in some way or other, to the *game* and especially at this time of the year. If it were not for the game, a country life would be like an *everlasting honeymoon*, which would, in about half a century, put an end to the human race. In towns, or large villages, people make a shift to find the means of rubbing the rust off from each other by a vast variety of sources of contest. A couple of wives meeting in the street, and giving each other a wry look, or a look not quite civil enough, will, if the parties be hard pushed for a ground of contention, do pretty well. But in the country, there is, alas ! no such resource. Here are no walls for people to take of each other. Here they are so placed as to prevent the possibility of such lucky local contact. Here is more than room of every sort, elbow, leg, horse, or carriage, for them all. Even at *Church* (most of the people being in the meeting-houses) the pews are surprisingly too large. Here, therefore, where all circumstances seem calculated to cause never-ceasing concord with its accompanying dullness, there would be no relief at all, were it not for the *game*. This, happily, supplies the place of all other sources of alternate dispute and reconciliation ; it keeps all in life and emotion, from the lord down to the hedger. When I see two men, whether in a churchyard, or even in the church itself, engaged in manifestly deep and most

## ON SHOOTING

momentous discourse, I will, if it be any time between September and February, bet ten to one, that it is, in some way or other, about *the game*. The wives and daughters hear so much of it, that they inevitably get engaged in the disputes ; and thus all are kept in a state of vivid animation. I should like very much to be able to take a spot, a circle of 12 miles in diameter, and take an exact amount of all the *time* spent by each individual, above the age of ten (that is the age they begin at), in talking, during the game season of one year, about the game and about sporting exploits. I verily believe that it would amount, upon an average, to six times as much as all the other talk put together ; and, as to the anger, the satisfaction, the scolding, the commendation, the chagrin, the exultation, the envy, the emulation, where are there any of these in the country, unconnected with *the game*?

There is, however, an important distinction to be made between *hunters* (including coursers) and *shooters*. The latter are, as far as relates to their exploits, a disagreeable class, compared with the former ; and the reason of this is, their doings are almost wholly their own ; while, in the case of the others, the achievements are the property of the dogs. Nobody likes to hear another talk *much* in praise of his own acts, unless those acts have a manifest tendency to produce some good to the hearer ; and shooters do talk *much* of their own exploits, and those exploits rather tend to *humiliate* the hearer. Then, a *great shooter* will,

nine times out of ten, go so far as almost to *lie a little* ; and, though people do not tell him of it, they do not like him the better for it ; and he but too frequently discovers that they do not believe him : whereas, hunters are mere followers of the dogs, as mere spectators ; their praises, if any are called for, are bestowed on the greyhounds, the hounds, the fox, the hare, or the horses. There is a little rivalry in the riding, or in the behaviour of the horses ; but this has so little to do with the personal merit of the sportsmen, that it never produces a want of good fellowship in the evening of the day. A shooter who has been *missing* all day, must have an uncommon share of good sense, not to feel mortified while the slaughterers are relating the adventures of that day ; and this is what cannot exist in the case of the hunters. Bring me into a room, with a dozen men in it, who have been sporting all day ; or, rather let me be in an adjoining room, where I can hear the sound of their voices, without being able to distinguish the words, and I will bet ten to one that I tell whether they be hunters or shooters.

I was once acquainted with a *famous shooter* whose name was William Ewing. He was a barrister of Philadelphia, but became far more renowned by his gun than by his law cases. We spent scores of days together a-shooting, and were extremely well matched, I having excellent dogs and caring little about my reputation as a shot, his dogs being good for nothing and he caring more for his reputation as a shot than as a lawyer. The

fact which I am going to relate respecting this gentleman, ought to be a warning to young men, how they become enamoured of this species of vanity. We had gone about ten miles from our home, to shoot where partridges were said to be very plentiful. We found them so. In the course of a November day, he had, just before dark, shot, and sent to the farm-house, or kept in his bag, *ninety-nine* partridges. He made some few *double shots*, and he might have had a miss or two, for he sometimes shot when out of my sight, on account of the woods. However, he said that he killed at every shot; and, as he had counted the birds, when we went to dinner, at the farm-house and when he cleaned his gun, he, just before sunset, knew that he had killed *ninety-nine* partridges, every one upon the wing, and a great part of them in woods very thickly set with largish trees. It was a grand achievement; but unfortunately, he wanted to make it *a hundred*. The sun was setting, and, in that country, darkness comes almost at once; it is more like the going out of a candle than that of a fire; and I wanted to be off, as we had a very bad road to go, and as he, being under strict petticoat government, to which he most loyally and dutifully submitted, was compelled to get home that night, taking me with him, the vehicle (horse and gig) being mine. I, therefore, pressed him to come away, and moved on myself towards the house (that of old John Brown, in Bucks county, grandfather of that General Brown, who gave some of our whiskered

heroes such a rough handling last war, which was waged for the purpose of 'deposing James Madison'), at which house I would have stayed all night, but from which I was compelled to go by that watchful government, under which he had the good fortune to live. Therefore I was in haste to be off. No : he would kill the *hundredth* bird ! In vain did I talk of the bad road and its many dangers for want of a moon. The poor partridges, which we had scattered about, were *calling* all round us ; and, just at this moment, up got one under his feet, in a field in which the wheat was three or four inches high. He shot and *missed*. 'That's it,' said he, running as if to *pick up* the bird. 'What !' said I, 'you don't think you *killed*, do you ? Why there is the bird now, not only alive, but *calling* in the wood' ; which was at about a hundred yards distance. He, in that *form of words* usually employed in such cases, asserted that he had shot the bird and saw it fall ; and I, in much about the same form of words, asserted that he had *missed*, and that I, with my own eyes, saw the bird fly into the wood. That was too much ! To *miss* once out of a hundred times ! To lose such a chance of immortality ! He was a good humoured man ; I like him very much ; and I could not help feeling for him, when he said, 'Well, Sir, I killed the bird ; and if you choose to go away and take your dog away, so as to prevent me from *finding* it, you must do it ; the dog is *yours*, to be sure.' 'The dog ?' said I, in a very mild tone. 'Why, Ewing,

## ON SHOOTING

there is the spot ; and could we not see it, upon this smooth green surface, if it were there ?' However, he began to *look about* ; and I called the dog, and affected to join him in the search. Pity for his weakness got the better of my dread of the bad road. After walking backward and forward many times upon about twenty yards square with our eyes to the ground, looking for what both of us knew was not there, I had passed him (he going one way and I the other), and I happened to be turning round just after I had passed him, when I saw him, putting his hand behind him, *take a partridge out of his bag and let it fall upon the ground* ! I felt no temptation to detect him, but turned away my head, and kept looking about. Presently he having returned to the spot where the bird was, called out to me, in a most triumphant tone : '*Here ! here !* Come here !' I went up to him, and he, pointing with his finger down to the bird, and looking hard in my face at the same time, said, 'There, Cobbett ; I hope that will be a *warning* to you never to be obstinate again !' 'Well,' said I, 'come along' : and away we went as merry as larks. When we got to Brown's, he told them the story, triumphed over me most clamorously, and, though he often repeated the story to my face, I never had the heart to let him know, that I knew of the imposition, which puerile vanity had induced so sensible and honourable a man to be mean enough to practise.

From *Rural Rides* 1830

## SOUTHEY

### A RETIRED TOBACCONIST AND HIS • FAMILY

TRADE in Mr. Allison's days was a school of thrift and probity, as much as of profit and loss ; such his shop had been when he succeeded to it upon his uncle's decease, and such it continued to be when he transmitted it to his son. Old Mr. Strahan the printer (the founder of his tyarchical dynasty) said to Dr. Johnson, that 'there are few ways in which a man can be more innocently employed than in getting money ;' and he added, that 'the more one thinks of this the juster it will appear.' Johnson agreed with him ; and though it was a money-maker's observation, and though the more it is considered now, the more fallacious it will be found, the general system of trade might have justified it at that time. The entrance of an exciseman never occasioned any alarm or apprehension at No. 113 Bishopsgate Street-within, nor any uncomfortable feeling, unless the officer happened to be one, who, by giving unnecessary trouble, and by gratuitous incivility in the exercise of authority, made an equitable law odious in its execution. They never there mixed weeds with their tobacco, nor adulterated it in any worse way ; and their snuff was

never rendered more pungent by stirring into it a certain proportion of pounded glass. The duties were honestly paid, with a clear perception that the impost fell lightly upon all whom it affected, and affected those only who chose to indulge themselves in a pleasure which was still cheap, and which, without any injurious privation, they might forgo. Nay, when our good man expatiated upon the uses of tobacco, which Mr. Bacon demurred at, and the Doctor sometimes playfully disputed, he ventured an opinion that among the final causes for which so excellent an herb had been created, the facilities afforded by it toward raising the revenue in a well governed country like our own might be one.

There was a strong family likeness between him and his sister, both in countenance and disposition. Elizabeth Allison was a person for whom the best and wisest man might have thanked Providence, if she had been allotted to him for help-mate. But though she had, in Shakespeare's language, 'withered on the virgin thorn', hers had not been a life of single blessedness : she had been a blessing first to her parents ; then to her brother and her brother's family, where she relieved an amiable, but sickly sister-in-law, from those domestic offices which require activity and forethought ; lastly, after the dispersion of his sons, the transfer of the business to the eldest, and the breaking up of his old establishment, to the widower and his daughter, the only child who cleaved to him, not like Ruth to Naomi, by a



meritorious act of duty, for in her case it was in the ordinary course of things, without either sacrifice or choice ; but the effect in endearing her to him was the same.

In advanced stages of society and nowhere more than in England at this time, the tendency of all things is to weaken the relations between parent and child, and frequently to destroy them, reducing human nature in this respect nearer to the level of animal life. Perhaps the greater number of male children who are 'born into the world' in our part of it, are *put out* at as early an age, proportionately, as the young bird is driven from its nest, or the young beast turned off by its dam as being capable of feeding and protecting itself ; and in many instances they are as totally lost to the parent, though not in like manner forgotten. Mr. Allison never saw all his children together after his removal from London. The only time when his three sons met at the Grange was when they came there to attend their father's funeral ; nor would they then have been assembled, if the Captain's ship had not happened to have recently arrived in port.

This is a state of things more favourable to the wealth than to the happiness of nations. It was a natural and pious custom in patriarchal times that the dead should be gathered unto their people. 'Bury me,' said Jacob, when he gave his dying charge to his sons—'bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which

Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burying place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife ; there they buried Isaac and Rebecca his wife ; and there I buried Leah.' Had such a passage occurred in Homer, or in Dante, all critics would have concurred in admiring the truth and beauty of the sentiment. He had buried his beloved Rachel by the way where she died ; but although he remembered this at his death, the orders which he gave were that his own remains should be laid in the sepulchre of his fathers. The same feeling prevails among many, or most of those savage tribes who are not utterly degraded. With them the tree is not left to lie where it falls. The body of one who dies on an expedition is interred on the spot, if distance or other circumstances render it inconvenient to transport the corpse ; but, however long the journey, it is considered as a sacred duty that the bones should at some time or other be brought home. In Scotland, where the common rites of sepulchre are performed with less decency than in any other Christian country, the care with which family burial-grounds in the remoter parts are preserved, may be referred as much to natural feeling as to hereditary pride.

But as indigenous flowers are eradicated by the spade and plough, so this feeling is destroyed in the stirring and bustling intercourse of commercial life. No room is left for it : as little of it at this time remains in wide America as in thickly-peopled

England. That to which soldiers and sailors are reconciled by the spirit of their profession and the chances of war and of the seas, the love of adventure and the desire of advancement cause others to regard with the same indifference ; and these motives are so prevalent, that the dispersion of families and the consequent disruption of natural ties, if not occasioned by necessity, would now in most instances be the effect of choice. Even those to whom it is an inevitable evil, and who feel it deeply as such, look upon it as something in the appointed course of things, as much as infirmity and age and death.

It is well for us that in early life we never think of the vicissitudes which lie before us ; or look to them only with pleasurable anticipations as they approach. . . The thought of them, when it comes across us in middle life, brings with it only a transient sadness, like the shadow of a passing cloud. We turn our eyes from them while they are in prospect, but when they are in retrospect many a longing lingering look is cast behind. So long as Mr. Allison was in business he looked to Thaxted Grange as the place where he hoped one day to enjoy the blessings of retirement—that *otium cum dignitate*, which in a certain sense the prudent citizen is more likely to attain than the successful statesman. It was the pleasure of recollection that gave this hope its zest and its strength. But after the object which during so many years he had held in view had been obtained,

his day-dreams, if he had allowed them to take their course, would have recurred more frequently to Bishopsgate Street than they had ever wandered from thence to the scenes of his boyhood. They recurred thither oftener than he wished, although few men have been more masters of themselves ; and then the remembrance of his wife, whom he had lost by a lingering disease in middle age ; and of the children, those who had died during their childhood, and those who in reality were almost as much lost to him in the ways of the world, made him always turn for comfort to the prospect of that better state of existence in which they should once more all be gathered together, and where there would be neither change nor parting. His thoughts often fell into this train, when on summer evenings he was taking a solitary pipe in his arbour, with the church in sight, and the churchyard wherein at no distant time he was to be laid in his last abode. Such musings induced a sense of sober piety—of thankfulness for former blessings, contentment with the present, and humble yet sure and certain hope for futurity, which might vainly have been sought at prayer-meetings, or evening lectures, where indeed little good can ever be obtained without some deleterious admixture, or alloy of baser feelings.

The happiness which he had found in retirement was of a different kind from what he had contemplated : for the shades of evening were gathering when he reached the place of his long-wished-for-

rest, and the picture of it which had imprinted itself on his imagination was a morning view. But he had been prepared for this by that slow change of which we are not aware during its progress till we see it reflected in others, and are thus made conscious of it in ourselves ; and he found a satisfaction in the station which he occupied there, too worthy in its nature to be called pride, and which had not entered into his anticipations. It is said to have been a saying of George the Third, that the happiest condition in which an Englishman could be placed, was just below that wherein it would have been necessary for him to act as Justice of the Peace, and above that which would have rendered him liable to parochial duties. This was just Mr. Allison's position : there was nothing which brought him into rivalry or competition with the surrounding squirearchy, and the yeomen and peasantry respected him for his own character, as well as for his name's sake. He gave employment to more persons than when he was engaged in trade, and his indirect influence over them was greater ; that of his sister was still more. The elders of the village remembered her in her youth, and loved her for what she then had been as well as for what she now was ; the young looked up to her as the Lady Bountiful, to whom no one that needed advice or assistance ever applied in vain.

From *The Doctor* 1837-47

## LETTERS

### LETTERS

TO S. T. COLERIDGE,

*Lisbon, May Day, 1800*

HERE, then, we are, thank God! alive, and recovering from dreadful sickness. I never suffered so much at sea, and Edith was worse than I was; we scarcely ate or slept at all: but the passage was very fine and short; five days and a half brought us to our port, with light winds the whole of the way. The way was not, however; without alarm. On Monday morning, between five and six, the captain was awakened with tidings that a cutter was bearing down upon us, with English colours, indeed, but apparently a French vessel; we made a signal, which was not answered; we fired a gun, she did the same, and preparations were made for action. We had another Lisbon packet in company, mounting six guns; our own force was ten; the cutter was a match, and more, for both, but we did not expect to be taken. You may imagine Edith's terror, awakened on a sick bed—disturbed I should have said—with these tidings! The captain advised me to surround her with mattresses in the cabin, but she would not believe herself in safety there, and I lodged her in the cockpit, and took my station on the quarter deck with a musket. How I felt I can hardly tell; the hurry of the scene, the sight of grape-shot, bar-shot, and other ingenious

implements of this sort, made an undistinguishable mixture of feelings. The cutter bore down between us ; I saw the smoke from her matches, we were so near, and not a man on board had the least idea but that an immediate action was to take place. We hailed her ; she answered in broken English, and passed on. 'Tis over !' cried somebody. 'Not yet !' said the captain ; and we expected she was coming round as about to attack our comrade vessel. She was English, however, manned chiefly from Guernsey, and this explained her Frenchified language. You will easily imagine that my sensations, at the ending of the business, were very definable,—one honest simple joy that I was in a whole skin ! I laid the musket in the chest with considerably more pleasure than I took it out. I am glad this took place ; it has shown me what it is to prepare for action.

Four years' absence from Lisbon have given everything the varnish of novelty, and this, with the revival of old associations, makes me pleased with everything. Poor Manuel, too, is as happy as man can be to see me once more ; here he stands at breakfast, and talks of his meeting me at Villa Franca, and what we saw at this place and at that, and hopes that whenever I go into the country he may go with me. It even amused me to renew my acquaintance with the fleas, who opened the campaign immediately on the arrival of a foreigner. We landed yesterday about ten in the morning, and took possession of our house the same night. Our house is very small, and

thoroughly Portuguese ; little rooms all doors and windows,—odd, but well calculated for coolness : from one window we have a most magnificent view over the river,—Almada hill and the opposite shore of Alentejo, bounded by hills about the half mountain height of Malvern.

Today is a busy day ; we are arranging away our things, and seeing visitors : these visits must all be returned ; there ends the ceremony, and then I may choose retirement. I hurry over my letters, for the sake of feeling at leisure to begin my employments. The voyage depriving me of all rest, and leaving me too giddy to sleep well, will, with the help of the fleas, break me in well for early rising. The work before me is almost of terrifying labour ; folio after folio to be gutted, for the immense mass of collateral knowledge which is indispensable : but I have leisure and inclination.

Edith, who has been looking half her time out of the window, has just seen 'really a decent looking woman' ; this will show you what cattle the passers-by must be. She has found out that there are no middle-aged women here, and it is true ; like their climate, it is only summer and winter. Their heavy cloaks of thick woollen, like horsemen's coats in England, amuse her in this weather, as much as her clear muslin would amuse them in an English winter.

*Thalaba* will soon be finished. Rickman is my plenipotentiary with the booksellers for this. Pray send me your Plays. *Thalaba* finished, all my



## SOUTHEY

poetry, instead of being wasted in rivulets and ditches, shall flow into the great *Madoc* Mississippi river. I have with me your volume, *Lyrical Ballads*, Burns, and *Gebir*. Read *Gebir* again : he grows upon me.

My uncle's library is admirably stocked with foreign books. My plan is this : immediately to go through the chronicles in order, and then make a skeleton of the narrative ; the timbers put together, the house may be furnished at leisure. It will be a great work, and worthy of all labour.

I am interrupted momentarily by visitors, like fleas, infesting a new-comer ! Edith's spirits are mending : a handful of roses has made her forgive the stink of Lisbon ; and the green peas, the oranges, etc., are reconciling her to a country for which nature has done so much. We are transported into your midsummer, your most luxuriant midsummer !—Plague upon that heart-stop, that has reminded me that this is a voyage of prescription as well as of pleasure. But I will get well ; and you must join us, and return with us over the Pyrenees, and some of my dreams must be fulfilled !

God bless you ! Write to me, and some long letters ; and send me your *Christabel* and your *Three Graves*, and finish them on purpose to send them. Edith's love. I reach a long arm, and shake hands with you across the seas. Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY

## LETTERS

TO CHARLES DANVERS,

*Keswick, Oct., 1803*

DEAR DANVERS,—Since my last I have taken very vigorous exercise, and am better for it. One morning round the Lake, a ten or twelve miles' walk—only disagreeable as being solitary. Yesterday with Coleridge to the top of Skiddaw, the work of four and a half hours, that is, there and back; but the descent is mere play. Up hill a man's wind would fail him, though his lungs were as capacious as a church organ, and the legs would ache though the calves were full-grown bulls. The panorama from the summit is very grand,—not indeed equal to what I have seen from Monchique, neither in height nor in its whole beauty, but in some certain features certainly of unequalled interest,—the Lakes Keswick and Bassenthwaite lying below us, and seeming each to fill its vale; for the shores are merged in the mountains, and quite lost as you look down, whereas the water, lying all in light, is seen in its full extent. The summit is covered with loose stones split by the frosts, and thus gradually are they reduced to a very rich soil, and washed down to the glens, so that, like old women, Skiddaw must grow shorter. For some little distance below, nothing but moss grows—for it is bitter bleak there, next-door to heaven. Today I have been tracking the river Greta, which, instead of *Great A*, ought to have been called *Great S*; but its name hath a good

and most apt meaning, 'The loud Lamerter.' It is a lovely stream. I have often forded such among the mountains of Algarve, and lingered to look at them with a wistful eye,—if I may so express myself, with a feeling that it was the only time I was ever to behold the scene before me, so beautiful ! That feeling has often risen in me when gazing upon the permanent things of nature which I am beholding but for a time. God knows I often looked upon my poor child with the same melancholy, as though to impress more deeply in remembrance a face whose beauties were certainly to change, and perhaps to pass away. How glad shall I be to show you these things, and to make you confess that if he who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb should brace me up to the climate, this is the best place for my sojourn ! We had, indeed, a gloomy and comfortless parting. Your comforts had been more deeply rooted up than mine ; and yet the axe cut deep at mine. Edith continues as you would expect—silently and deeply affected. I have not yet been able to get her out of the house, though our weather has been uncommonly fine ; and without exercise the tonics which she takes under Doctor Southey ( 1 ) will be of little avail. Last night, indeed, we went to see a set of strollers play *She Stoops to Conquer*. Nothing could be worse,—and that, you know, was the merit we desired. But it made me melancholy to see such a set of wretches collected together,—one of them an old man, I am sure little short of fourscore, lean and lantern-jawed,

and so ripe for the grave, that his face was as striking a *memento mori* as ever glared in gold letters under the skull and thigh bones of a tombstone.

Moses grows up as miraculous a boy as ever King Pharaoh's daughter found his namesake to be. I am perfectly astonished at him; and his father has the same sentiment of wonder and the same forefeeling that it is a prodigious and an unnatural intellect,—and that he will not live to be a man. There is more, Danvers, in the old woman's saying, 'he is too clever to live,' than appears to a common observer. Diseases which ultimately destroy, in their early stages quicken and kindle the intellect like opium. It seems as if death looked out the most promising plants in this great nursery, to plant them in a better soil. The boy's great delight is to get his father to talk metaphysics to him,—few *men* understand him so perfectly,—and then his own incidental sayings are quite wonderful. 'The pity is,'—said he one day to his father, who was expressing some wonder that he was not so pleased as he expected with riding in a wheelbarrow,—'the pity is that I've always thinking of my thoughts.' The child's imagination is equally surprising; he invents the wildest tales you ever heard, a history of the Kings of England who are to be. 'How do you know that this is to come to pass, Hartley?' 'Why you know it must be something, or it would not be in my head;' and so, because it had not been, did Moses conclude it must be, and away

## SOUTHEY

he prophesies of his King Thomas the Third. Then he has a tale of a monstrous beast called the Rabzeze Kallaton, whose skeleton is on the outside of his flesh ; and he goes on with the oddest and most original inventions, till he sometimes actually terrifies himself, and says, 'I'se afraid of my own thoughts.' It may seem like superstition, but I have a feeling that such an intellect can never reach maturity. The springs are of too exquisite workmanship to last long. God bless you. I miss you, and King, and Cupid, and my books, and sometimes James the bookseller. Would to God that was all that I missed ! but that God's will is best has been at all times present to my heart and reason.

.

R. S.

TO S. T. COLERIDGE,

*Greta Hall, March 12, 1804*

You would rejoice with me, were you now at Keswick, at the tidings that a box of books is safely harboured in the Mersey, so that for the next fortnight I shall be more interested in the news of Fletcher than of Bonaparte. It contains some duplicates of the lost cargo ; among them the collection of the oldest Spanish poems, in which is a metrical romance upon the Cid. I shall sometimes want you for Gothic etymology. Talk of the happiness of getting a great prize in the lottery ! What is that to the opening of a box of books !

## LETTERS

The joy upon lifting up the cover must be something like what we shall feel when Peter the Porter opens the door upstairs, and says, 'Please to walk in, sir.' That I shall never be paid for my labour according to the current value of time and labour, is tolerably certain; but if any one should offer me £10,000 to forgo that labour, I should bid him and his money go to the devil, for twice the sum could not purchase me half the enjoyment. It will be a great delight to me in the next world to take a fly and visit these old worthies, who are my only society here, and to tell them what excellent company I found them here at the lakes of Cumberland, two centuries after they had been dead and turned to dust. In plain truth, I exist more among the dead than the living, and think more about them, and, perhaps, feel more about them. Moses has quite a passion for drawing, strong enough to be useful were he a little older. When I visit London, I will set him up in drawing books. He was made quite happy yesterday by two drawings of Charles Fox, which happened to be in my desk, and to be just fit for him. The dissected map of England gives him his fill of delight, and he now knows the situation of all the counties in England as well as any one in the house, or, indeed, in the kingdom. I have promised him Asia; it is a pity that Africa and America are so badly divided as to be almost useless, for this is an excellent way of learning geography, and I know by experience that what is so learnt is never forgotten. You would be

## SOUTHEY

amused to see the truly Catholic horror he feels at the Jews, because they do not eat pork and ham, on which account he declares he never will be an old clothes man.

R. S.

TO CHARLES DANVERS, BRISTOL,

*Keswick, Jan. 15, 1805*

DEAR DANVERS,—Hartley is from home, visiting Mr. Wordsworth's sisters near Penrith. It is impossible to give you any adequate idea of his oddities ; for he is the oddest of all God's creatures, and becomes quainter and quainter every day. It is not easy to conceive, what is perfectly true, that he is totally destitute of anything like modesty, yet without the slightest tinge of impudence in his nature. His religion makes one of the most humorous parts of his character. 'I'm a boy of a very religious turn,' he says ; for he always talks of himself and examines his own character, just as if he was speaking of another person, and as impartially. Every night he makes an extempore prayer aloud ; but it is always in bed, and not till he is comfortable there and got into the mood. When he is ready he touches Mrs. Wilson, who sleeps with him, and says, 'Now listen !' and off he sets like a preacher. If he has been behaving amiss, away he goes for the Bible, and looks out for something appropriate to his case in the Psalms

or the Book of Job. The other day, after he had been in a violent passion, he chose out a chapter against wrath. 'Ah! that suits me!' The Bible also is resorted to whenever he ails anything, or else the Prayer Book. . . .

In one part of his character he seems to me strikingly to resemble his father,—in the affection he has for those who are present with him, and the little he cares about them when he is out of their sight. It is not possible for one human being to love another more dearly than Mrs. Wilson loves him, and he is as fond of her as it is in his nature to be of anything, and probably loves her better than he does anybody else. Last summer she was dangerously ill, and Hartley in consequence came and lived at home. He never manifested the slightest uneasiness or concern about her, nor ever would go near her. I do not know whether I should wish to have such a child or not. There is not the slightest evil in his disposition, but it wants something to make it steadily good; physically and morally there is a defect of courage. He is afraid of receiving pain to such a degree that, if any person begins to read a newspaper, he will leave the room, lest there should be anything shocking in it. This is the explication of his conduct during Mrs. Wilson's illness. He would not see her because it would give him pain, and when he was out of sight he contrived to forget her. I fear that, if he lives, he will dream away life like his father, too much delighted with his own ideas ever to embody them, or suffer them,



## SOUTHEY

if he can help it, to be disturbed. I gave him *Robinson Crusoe* two years ago. He never has read, nor will read, beyond Robinson's departure from the island. 'No,' he says; he does not care about him afterwards, and never will know. You will find infinite amusement from him when you come to visit us. I have a noble jackass, which you will find of use, for you must not fatigue yourself; and, by John's help, twelve or sixteen miles may be accomplished without exertion. God bless you.

R. SOUTHEY

TO HENRY TAYLOR,

*Keswick, Dec. 31, 1825*

MY DEAR H. T.,—I have pursued so little method in my own studies at any time of my life that I am in truth very little qualified to direct others. Having been from youth, and even childhood, an omnivorous reader, I found myself when I commenced man with a larger stock of general information than young men usually possess, and the desultory reading in which I have always indulged (making it indeed my whole and sole recreation), has proved of the greatest use when I have been pursuing a particular subject through all its ramifications.

The rules for composition appear to me very simple; inasmuch as any style is peculiar, the

peculiarity is a fault, and the proof of this is the easiness with which it is imitated, or, in other words, caught. You forgive it in the original for its originality, and because originality is usually connected with power. Sallust and Tacitus are examples among the Latins, Sir T. Browne, Gibbon, and Johnson among our own authors ; but look at the imitations of Gibbon and Johnson ! My advice to a young writer is, that he should weigh well what he says, and not be anxious concerning *how* he says it : that his first object should be to express his meaning as perspicuously, his second as briefly as he can, and in this everything is included.

One of our exercises at Westminster was to abridge the book which we were reading. I believe that this was singularly useful to me. The difficulties in narration are to select and arrange. The first must depend upon your judgement. For the second, my way is, when the matter does not dispose itself to my liking, and I cannot readily see how to connect one part with another naturally, or make an easy transition, to lay it aside. What I should bungle at now may be hit off tomorrow ; so when I come to a stop in one work I lay it down and take up another.

For a statesman the first thing requisite is to be well read in history. Our politicians are continually striking upon rocks and shallows, which are all laid down in the chart. As this is the most important and most interesting branch of knowledge, so also is it one to which there is no end.

## SOUTHEY

The more you read the more you desire to read, and the more you find there is to be read. And yet I would say this to encourage the student, not to dismay him, for there is no pleasure like this perpetual acquisition and perpetual pursuit.

The advice I would give any one who is disposed really to read for the sake of knowledge, is, that he should have two or three books in course of reading at the same time. He will read a great deal more in that time and with much greater profit. All travels are worth reading, as subsidiary to reading, and in fact essential parts of it : old or new, it matters not—something is to be learnt from all. And the custom of making brief notes of reference to everything of interest or importance would be exceeding useful.

God bless you !

R. S.

To C. C. SOUTHEY,

*Keswick, Feb. 7, 1838*

MY DEAR CUTHBERT,—It is an uncomfortable thing to be straitened in your situation ; but for most undergraduates it is far more injurious to have too much. If you can save from your income, I shall be glad ; and I have confidence enough in you to believe that you would have much more satisfaction in saving from it than you could derive from any needless expenditure. I do not mean that you should receive less from me, if you find

## LETTERS

that you can do with less ; but that you should lay by the surplus for your own use. Next to moral and religious habits, habits of frugality are the most important ; they belong, indeed, to our duties. In this virtue your dear mother never was, surpassed. Had it not been for her admirable management, this house could not have been kept up, nor this family brought up as they were. God never blessed any man with a truer helpmate than she was to me in this and in every other respect, till she ceased to be herself.

I dwell upon this, not as supposing you need any exhortation upon the subject, for I have the most perfect confidence in you ; no father ever had less apprehension for a son in sending him to the University. But frugality is a virtue which will contribute continually and most essentially to your comfort ; without it it is impossible that you should do well, and you know not how much nor how soon it may be needed. It is far from my intention, if I should live till you take your degree, to hurry you into the world, and bid you to shift for yourself as soon as you can. On the contrary, there is nothing on which I could look forward with so much hope, as to directing your studies after you have finished your collegiate course, and training you to build upon my foundations. That object is one which it would be worth wishing to live for. But when you take your degree, I, if I should then be living, shall be hard upon three score and ten. My whole income dies with me. At first, therefore, great frugality will be required,

though eventually there may be a fair provision for all. I make no estimate of my library, because if it please God that you should make use of the books in pursuing my course, they would be of more value to you than any sum that could be raised by dispersing them.

It is fitting that you should bear all this in mind ; but not for discouragement. Your prospects, God be thanked, are better than if you were heir to a large estate—far better for your moral and intellectual nature, your real welfare, your happiness here and hereafter. God bless you, my dear Cuthbert ! Your affectionate Father,

ROBERT SOUTHEY

# WALTER BAGEHOT

## SHAKESPEARE—THE MAN,

To a great experience one thing is essential, an experiencing nature. It is not enough to have opportunity, it is essential to feel it. Some occasions come to all men ; but to many they are of little use, and to some they are none. What, for example, has experience done for the distinguished Frenchman, the name of whose essay is prefixed to this paper? M. Guizot is the same man that he was in 1820, or, we believe, as he was in 1814. Take up one of his lectures, published before he was a practical statesman ; you will be struck with the width of view, the amplitude and the solidity of the reflections ; you will be amazed that a mere literary teacher could produce anything so wise ; but take up afterwards an essay published since his fall—and you will be amazed to find no more. Napoleon the First is come and gone—the Bourbons of the old *régime* have come and gone—the Bourbons of the new *régime* have had their turn. M. Guizot has been first minister of a citizen king ; he has led a great party ; he has pronounced many a great *discours* that was well received by the second elective assembly in the world. But there is no trace of this in his writings. No one would guess from them that

their author had ever left the professor's chair. It is the same, we are told, with small matters : when M. Guizot walks the street, he seems to see nothing, the head is thrown back, the eye fixed, and the mouth working. His mind is no doubt at work, but it is not stirred by what is external. Perhaps it is the internal activity of mind that overmasters the perceptive power. Anyhow there might have been an *émeute* in the street and he would not have known it ; there have been revolutions in his life and he is scarcely the wiser. Among the most frivolous and fickle of civilized nations he is alone. They pass from the game of war to the game of peace, from the game of science to the game of art, from the game of liberty to the game of slavery, from the game of slavery to the game of licence ; he stands like a schoolmaster in the playground, without sport and without pleasure, firm and sullen, slow and awful.

A man of this sort is a curious mental phenomenon. He appears to get early—perhaps to be born with—a kind of dry schedule or catalogue of the universe ; he has a ledger in his head, and has a title to which he can refer any transaction ; nothing puzzles him, nothing comes amiss to him, but he is not in the least the wiser for anything. Like the book-keeper, he has his heads of account, and he knows them, but he is no wiser for the particular items. After a busy day, and after a slow day, after a few entries, and after many, his knowledge is exactly the same : take his opinion of Baron Rothschild, he will say, 'Yes, he keeps

an account with us ; ' of Humphrey Brown, ' Yes, we have that account, too.' Just so with the class of minds which we are speaking of, and in greater matters. Very early in life they come to a certain and considerable acquaintance with the world ; they learn very quickly all they can learn, and naturally they never, in any way, learn any more. Mr. Pitt is, in this country, the type of the character. Mr. Alison, in a well-known passage, makes it a matter of wonder that he was fit to be a Chancellor of the Exchequer at twenty-three, and it is a great wonder. But it is to be remembered that he was no more fit at forty-three. As somebody said, he did not grow, he was cast. Experience taught him nothing, and he did not believe that he had anything to learn. The habit of mind in smaller degrees is not very rare, and might be illustrated without end. Hazlitt tells a story of West, the painter, that is in point : When some one asked him if he had ever been to Greece, he answered, ' No, I have read a descriptive catalogue of the principal objects in that country, and I believe I am as well conversant with them as if I had visited it.' No doubt he was just as well conversant, and so would be any *doctrinaire*.

But Shakespeare was not a man of this sort. If he walked down a street, he knew what was in that street. His mind did not form in early life a classified list of all the objects in the universe, and learn no more about the universe ever after. From a certain fine sensibility of nature, it is plain that he took a keen interest not only in the general



and coarse outlines of objects, but in their minutest particulars and gentlest gradations. . . .

In this respect Shakespeare had the advantage of one whom, in many points, he much resembled—Sir Walter Scott. For a great poet, the organization of the latter was very blunt; he had no sense of smell, little sense of taste, almost no ear for music (he knew a few, perhaps three, Scotch tunes, which he avowed that he had learnt in sixty years, by hard labour and mental association), and not much turn for the minutiae of Nature in any way. The effect of this may be seen in some of the best descriptive passages of his poetry, and we will not deny that it does (although proceeding from a sensuous defect), in a certain degree, add to their popularity. He deals with the main outlines and great points of Nature, never attends to any others, and in this respect he suits the comprehension and knowledge of many who know only those essential and considerable outlines. Young people, especially, who like big things, are taken with Scott, and bored by Wordsworth, who knew too much. And after all, the two poets are in proper harmony, each with his own scenery. Of all beautiful scenery the Scotch is the roughest and barest, as the English is the most complex and cultivated. . . .

A perfectly poetic appreciation of nature contains two elements,—a knowledge of facts, and a sensibility to charms. Everybody who may have to speak to some naturalists will be well aware how widely the two may be separated. He

## SHAKESPEARE—THE MAN

will have seen that a man may study butterflies and forget that they are beautiful, or be perfect in the 'lunar theory' without knowing what most people mean by the moon. Generally such people prefer the stupid parts of nature—worms, and Cochin China fowls. But Shakespeare was not obtuse. The lines—

### Daffodils

That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,  
Or Cytherea's breath,

seem to show that he knew those feelings of youth, to which beauty is more than a religion.

In his mode of delineating natural objects Shakespeare is curiously opposed to Milton. The latter, who was still by temperament, and a schoolmaster by trade, selects a beautiful object, puts it straight out before him and his readers, and accumulates upon it all the learned imagery of a thousand years; Shakespeare glances at it and says something of his own. It is not our intention to say that, as a describer of the external world, Milton is inferior; in *set* description we rather think that he is the better. We only wish to contrast the mode in which the delineation is effected. The one is like an artist who dashes off any number of picturesque sketches at any moment; the other like a man who has lived at Rome, has undergone a thorough training, and by deliberate and conscious effort, after a long study of the best masters, can produce a few great

pictures. Milton, accordingly, as has been often remarked, is careful in the choice of his subjects ; he knows too well the value of his labour to be very ready to squander it ; Shakespéare, on the contrary, describes anything that comes to hand, for he is prepared for it whatever it may be, and what he paints he paints without effort. . .

Perhaps the contrast may be accounted for by the way in which the two poets acquired their knowledge of scenes and scenery. We think we demonstrated before that Shakespeare was a sportsman, but if there be still a sceptic or a dissentient, let him read the following remarks on dogs :—

My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
 So flewed, so sanded ; and their heads are hung  
 With ears that sweep away the morning dew,  
 Crook-kneed and dewlapped like Thessalian bulls ,  
 Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,  
 Each under each. A cry more tunable  
 Was never holloa'd to nor cheered with horn  
 In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly.

‘Judge when you hear.’ It is evident that the man who wrote this was a judge of dogs, was an out-of-door sporting man, full of natural sensibility, not defective in ‘daintiness of ear’, and above all things, apt to cast on Nature random, sportive, half boyish glances, which reveal so much, and bequeath such abiding knowledge. Milton, on the contrary, went out to see Nature. He left a narrow cell, and the intense study which was his ‘portion in this life’, to take a slow, careful, and

reflective walk. In his treatise on education he has given us his notion of the way in which young people should be familiarized with natural objects. 'But,' he remarks, 'to return to our institute ; besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining pleasure from pleasure itself abroad ; in those vernal seasons of the year when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against nature, not to go out and see her riches and partake in her rejoicing in heaven and earth. I should not therefore be a persuader to them of studying much in these, after two or three years, that they have well laid their grounds, but to ride out in companies, with prudent and staid guides, to all quarters of the land ; learning and observing all places of strength, all commodities of building and of soil, for towns and tillage, harbours and ports of trade. Sometimes taking sea as far as our navy, to learn there also what they can in the practical knowledge of sailing and of sea-fight.' Fancy 'the prudent and staid guides'. What a machinery for making pedants. Perhaps Shakespeare would have known that the conversation would be in this sort :—'I say, Shallow, that mare is going in the knees. She has never been the same since you larked her over the fivebar, while Moleyes was talking clay and agriculture. I do not hate Latin so much, but I hate "argillaceous earth" ; and what use is *that* to a fellow in the Guards, I should like to know?' Shakespeare had himself this sort of boyish buoyancy. 'He was

not 'one of the staid guides'. We might further illustrate it. Yet this would be tedious enough, and we prefer to go on and show what we mean by an experiencing nature in relation to men and women, just as we have striven to indicate what it is in relation to horses and hares.

The reason why so few good books are written, is that so few people that can write know anything. In general an author has always lived in a room, has read books, has cultivated science, is acquainted with the style and sentiments of the best authors, but he is out of the way of employing his own eyes and ears. He has nothing to hear and nothing to see. His life is a vacuum. The mental habits of Robert Southey, which about a year ago were so extensively praised in the public journals, are the type of literary existence, just as the praise bestowed on them shows the admiration excited by them among literary people. He wrote poetry (as if anybody could) before breakfast; he read during breakfast. He wrote history until dinner; he corrected proof sheets between dinner and tea; he wrote an essay for the 'Quarterly' afterwards; and after supper by way of relaxation composed the 'Doctor'—a lengthy and elaborate jest. Now, what can anyone think of such a life—except how clearly it shows that the habits best fitted for communicating information, formed with the best care, and daily regulated by the best motives, are exactly the habits which are likely to afford a man the least information to communicate. Southey had no events, no experiences.

## THE EDUCATION OF PITT

THE education of Mr. Pitt was as favourable to the development of his peculiar powers as his position. The public education of England has very great merits, and is well fitted for the cultivation of the average Englishman ; but one at least of the qualities which fit it for training ordinary men unfit it for training an extraordinary man. Its greatest value to the mass of those who are brought up in it, is its influence in diminishing their self-confidence. They are early brought into a little but rough world, which effects on a small scale what the real world will afterwards effect still more thoroughly on a large one. It teaches boys, who are no better than other boys, that they are no better than other boys ; that the advantages of one are compensated by the advantages of others ; that the world is a miscellaneous and motley medley, in which it is not easy to conquer, and over which it is impossible to rule. But it is not desirable that a young man in Pitt's position should learn this lesson. If you are to train a man to be prime minister at five and twenty, you must not dishearten his self-confidence, though it be overweening ; you must not tame his energy, though it seem presumptuous. Ordinary men should and must be taught to fear the face of the world, they are to be guided by its laws and regulated by its manners ; the one exceptional man, who is in his first youth to rule the world, must be trained not to fear it, but despise it.

The legitimate food of a self-relying nature is early solitude, and the most stimulating solitude is solitude in the midst of society. Mr. Pitt's education was of this kind entirely. He was educated at home during his whole boyhood. He was sent to Cambridge at a most unusually early age. He lived there almost wholly with Mr. Pretyman, his tutor. 'While Mr. Pitt was an undergraduate,' writes that gentleman, 'he never omitted attending chapel morning and evening in the public hall, except when prevented by indisposition. Nor did he pass a single evening out of the college walls; indeed, most of his time was spent with me. During his whole residence at the University,' Mr. Pretyman continues, 'I never knew him spend an idle day, nor did he ever fail to attend me at the appointed hour.' He did not make any friends, scarcely any social acquaintances till he had taken his degree. He passed very much of his time, his tutor tells us, in very severe study, and very much of it, as we may easily believe, in the most absorbing of early pleasures—the monotonous excitement of ambitious anticipation. On an inferior man, this sort of youth could have had but one effect—it must have made him a prig. But it had not that effect on Pitt. It contributed to make him a shy, haughty, and inaccessible man. Such he emerged from Cambridge, and such he continued through life to be; but he was preserved from the characteristic degradation of well-intentioned and erudite youth by two great counteracting influences,—a strong

sense of humour and a genuine interest in great subjects. His sense of fun was, indeed, disguised from the vulgar by a rigid mask of grave dignity ; but in private it was his strongest characteristic. 'Don't tell me,' he is said to have remarked, 'of a man's being able to talk sense ; everyone can talk sense ; can he talk nonsense?' And Mr. Wilberforce, the most cheerful of human beings, who had seen the most amusing society of his generation, always declared that Pitt's wit was the best which he had ever known. And it was likely to be ; humour gains much by constant suppression, and at no time of life was Pitt ever wanting in dexterous words. No man who really cares for great things, and who sees the laughable side of little things, ever becomes a 'prig'.

While at Cambridge Pitt likewise paid, as his tutor tells us, great attention to what are now, in popular estimation, the characteristic studies of the place. His attainments in mathematics were probably not much like the elaborate and exact knowledge which the higher wranglers now yearly carry away from the University, but they were considerable for his time, and they comprehended the most instructive part of the subject, the first principles ; a vague hope, too, is expressed that he may read Newton's *Principia* 'after some summer circuit', which, as we may easily suppose, was not realized.

Though the tutor's information is not very exact, we may accept his general testimony that Pitt was a good mathematician, according to the academic standing of that day. There is, indeed,



strong corroborative evidence of the fact in Mr. Pitt's financial speeches. It is not easy to draw out the evidence in writing, and it would be very tiresome to read the evidence if it were drawn out ; but a skilful observer of the contrast between educated and uneducated language will find in Pitt many traces of mathematical studies. Raw argument and common sense correctness come by nature, but only a preliminary education can give the final edge to accuracy in statement, and the last nicety to polished and penetrating discussion. In later life, the facile use of financial rhetoric was as familiar to Mr. Pitt as to Mr. Gladstone.

His classical studies were pursued upon a plan suggested by his father, which was certainly well adapted for the particular case, though it would not be good for mankind in general. A sufficient experience proves that no one can be taught any language thoroughly and accurately except by composition in it ; and Mr. Pitt had apparently never practised any sort of composition in Greek or Latin, whether verse or prose. But, for the purpose of disciplining a student in *his own* language, the reverse practice of translating from the classical languages is the best single expedient which has ever been made use of. And to this Mr. Pitt was trained by his father from early boyhood. He was taught to read off the classics into the best English he could find, never inserting a word with which he was not satisfied, but waiting till he found one with which he *was* satisfied. By constant practice he became so ready that he never

stopped at all ; the right word always presented itself immediately. When he was asked in later life, how he had acquired the mellifluous abundance of appropriate language with which he amazed and charmed the House of Commons, it was to this suggestion of his father that he at once imputed it.

To the probably unconscious influence of the same instructor we may ascribe his early interest in parliamentary conflict. We have before quoted the naive expression of his boyish desire to be in the House of Commons. There is a still more curious story of him in very early youth. It is said : 'He was introduced, on the steps of the throne in the House of Lords, to Mr. Fox, who was his senior by ten years, and already in the fullness of his fame. Fox used afterwards to relate that, as the discussion proceeded, Pitt repeatedly turned to him and said, "But surely, Mr. Fox, that might be met thus ;" or, "Yes, but he lays himself open to retort."' What the particular criticisms were, Fox had forgotten ; but he said that he was much struck at the time by the precocity of a lad who through the whole sitting was thinking only how all the speeches on both sides could be answered.'

Nor were his political studies confined to the studious cultivation of oratorical language, or to a thorough acquisition of the art of argumentative fence : he attended also to the *substance* of political science. He was the first great English statesman who read, understood, and valued *The Wealth of Nations*. Fox had 'no great opinion

of *those* reasonings' ; and the doctrines of free trade, though present, like all great political ideas, to the overflowing mind of Burke, were, like all his ideas, at the daily mercy of his eager passions and his intense and vivid imagination. Mr. Pitt, as it would seem, while still at college, acquired and arranged them with the collected consistency which was the characteristic of his mind. So thorough a training, in the superficial accomplishments, the peculiar associations, and the abstract studies of political life, has not perhaps fallen to the lot of any other English statesman.

# SIR WILLIAM MARRIS

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS, LUCKNÔW UNIVERSITY

December 15, 1924

WHAT leads most surely at all to knowledge is perhaps something that is a gift of the gods. It is none other than the passion for knowledge. The true student is not merely a learner; he is not merely (though always he ought to be also) a disciple: essentially he is the pursuer, the one who desires; the real *tâlib-‘ilm*, the seeker after knowledge. Examinations, scholarships, degrees, and the income to which a degree may lead are really all incidentals: we cannot ignore them and at times they are dreadfully importunate; but yet the true student is he who, finding himself face to face with the mystery and richness of humanity, sets himself down to the heroic task of acquiring as much understanding of it as is possible in the span of human life with the mind and senses with which he is equipped and which he intends to train by the way. It is the hunger and thirst after knowledge—for her own sake, because of the charm and beauty of her—that makes the true student. The true student must be a true lover.

Let us think of the qualities which we want to find in our citizens of the future, and consider what

methods of study are likely to evoke them. India aspires to be a full member of the community of nations, respected by all the others not for her past memories, but for her present capacity and culture. But this is a competitive age, and there is little sentiment in international affairs. The men who are to sustain this country's reputation in the eyes of the world must be practical, cultured, exact, decisive people, knowing precisely what they think and why they think it.

I suggest that orderliness should be the first aim of our ideal student. Sometimes, as in logic or mathematics or Arabic, order is imposed upon him. Sometimes he has to find it for himself. In many subjects—whether it is constitutional history, or English literature, or a play of Shakespeare—there are certain salient points which can be seized and occupied at the outset. The beginnings of Parliament, the destruction of the old nobles, the restoration of personal rule and its downfall under the Stuarts, the rule of aristocracy under the guise of Parliament, the Reform Bill and the broadening of democracy—these are the turning points of English history along one line: just as her severance from France, her disowning of the Papacy, her taking to the sea, her founding overseas dominions, her resistance to the domination of Europe by any single Power, her break with America, are the main points along another line.

Take, again, the story of the greatest war in history—what are the essential points for the student to make sure of? I suppose they are the

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

invasion of Belgium, the battle of the Marne, the locking of the western lines, the battle of Jutland, the submarine campaign, and the entry of America. These I put first, not because they tell the whole story, but because they seem to me to lead most directly, unerringly, to the finale, more directly (though here I am on debated ground) than even the immense events in Russia, Gallipoli and Mesopotamia.

Or take a much homelier case: the common case of the non-mechanically minded man who becomes owner of a motor car. Anxious to understand its working, he peers inside, and sees a mass of contorted metal viscera, black, oily and repellent. If he investigates them haphazard I am sorry for him. But suppose he says to himself, 'There must be method in this madness. This beast must have not merely a bony framework, but also an alimentary canal, a muscular system, a nervous system; why, it has even eyes and voice;' then he is on his way to come much quicker to an understanding of the petrol-feed, the ignition, the engine, the transmission, the controls, the lighting and the electric horn.

What I have been saying about the taking of things in the right order is only one form of the doctrine of economy of effort. As you know, in American workshops this has been exalted to a science. Lecturers instruct workmen how to perform each movement of hand or foot with a view to the conservation of muscular energy. The trained athlete also knows something of the art.

It is much the same in reading. Cultivate the habit of looking for the essentials first, because that is the economic method of study.

Once get the main props of the building fixed firm and in the right relation; and it is easy to fill in the interspaces. Not all these are nearly of equal interest or value, and the wise student will concentrate on those which attract him most. But in any case, let him pick out for exact and accurate knowledge some special section, some outstanding detail of history, some particular investigation, or some passage of wisdom or beauty in a book, and make it his own to the last comma. We are warned against undue memorizing: and to memorize without understanding is in truth a sterile labour; but when you come on what you yourself feel is good for you, then by all means get it by heart. There is no way of possessing a subject without laying by the best bits of it securely in one's head. The possession of a dozen of the finest passages in Shakespeare or Shelley will do more for a man's culture than reading many commentaries on these writers.

Next in order I suggest come accuracy and thoroughness, qualities more difficult to cultivate in another language than in one's own. It is the peculiar gift of natural science, mathematics and logic that they insistently impose accuracy of observation and closeness of reasoning on us. But with literary subjects it is different. Words are of all things the most deceiving: and never more so than when they seem familiar and we have for-

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

gotten to watch them closely. What we need is to make sure that words correspond to things ; never to let ourselves be dominated by symbols, phrases, catch-words ; but to look through these and behind them to reality. This is by no means easy. I believe the best help lies in writing. Here comes in the value of original expression. It is all very well to be made a full man by reading ; but it is writing (says Bacon) that maketh an exact man. We can only be sure of our understanding of a matter when we begin to put it out for ourselves. Commentaries and paraphrases of an author have their use ; but it is better to expound him for oneself and to blunder in the process than slavishly to follow other men's expositions. It is better to try and to fail, even to fail badly on one's own account, than not to try at all. What Browning says about 'the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin', strong saying as it is, has a biting moral for each of us.

One word as to the manner of exposition. If I had to teach writing in an Indian university I should insist *ad nauseam* on the value of simplicity. The more simple and the more direct you are, the better will your words express your thought ; and the effort to find the right short word will do much to clarify thought. It was unlucky for India that she began to model her expression on the great writers of English at a time when they themselves were so charged with classicisms and ornamentation, traceable to the influence of that highly ingenious and elaborate writer, Sir Thomas



Browne. We never have recaptured in this country the clean, brief Saxon speech. And I confess with regret that our own official language has done much to stereotype the bad habits of English. There are many honourable exceptions. But I believe that more than half the written output of our offices and secretariats is expressed in a weak and wordy jargon. We are vague when we ought to be definite : we inveterately prefer the abstract to the concrete : we fill out sentences with needless and meaningless padding (like 'having regard to all the circumstances of the case') ; we love mechanical and otiose adjectives and adverbs ; we slither into deformities of syntax which will not bear inspection ; we glorify the commonest of wayside objects (like railways or forests or joint stock companies) with capital letters ; and above all if we can possibly convey our meaning in the passive rather than the active voice, that is if we can recoil from a positive convincing affirmation, we do so : all of which things are wrong and of bad example. I am not sure how all this has come about ; partly perhaps from our having inherited insincere models ; possibly from some desire to sustain the artificial dignity of diction of the Mogul court ; but mainly I suspect from indolence or fear of making mistakes through trying to be too precise : in fact from lack of concentration. Listen to what Henry James said about the changes which he saw happening to the English language in America twenty years ago : 'The note of cheapness—of the cheap and easy—is especially

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

fatal to any effect of security of intention in the speech of a society ; for it is scarce necessary to remind you that there are two very different kinds of ease ; the ease that comes from the conquest of a difficulty, and the ease that comes from the vague dodging of it. In the one case you gain facility, in the other case you get more looseness.' A commentator praises that phrase of his, 'security of intention,' as shining like a searchlight, as clarifying and intensifying the argument for the coherent culture of speech. There is certainly not enough 'security of intention' about our official writing ; and both for our own sakes and on account of the bad example we are setting I hope that it is not too late for us to amend our ways.

And here I would add—do not be afraid of revising. Rarely one dulls and stales one's work by over-elaboration. Much more often one does not take care enough. There is often so much to be said that the manner of saying seems to matter little. It really matters much to the reader and even more to the writer. There is always something better in you than you have put forth in the first free easy movement. There is much to be learned from looking at the manuscripts of great writers. Seldom are their emendations—their second or third thoughts—wrong. And remember also this : there is no material so easy and plastic to work in as words—words so long as they are in manuscript, *kachha*, unprinted ; but once you bake your language into type, once you print and publish, once even you sign a

letter, words are of all things most intractable and rigid. Is not that a reason for taking much care with them?

One more point. I spoke of accuracy and thoroughness. You remember that fine poem called 'A Grammarian's Funeral'. The scholar who gave his life fanatically to the smallest minutiae of scholarship\* is carried for burial to the lofty mountain top, because the intensity of his devotion showed the loftiness of his spirit. I do not hold him up for universal imitation. But there is wisdom for us all in the lines :

That low man goes on adding one to one.

His hundred's soon hit :

This high man, aiming at a million,

Misses a unit.

Genius, command, fame and glory, these are not in the reach of every man. 'Always keep in mind the weight that your shoulders can bear,' says Horace. Better modest achievement than ambitious failure. If a man sticks to it steadily and earnestly, 'precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little,' there is no fear of his failing. The image of the true learner that comes readiest to my mind is a picture of the bricklayer (it occurs to me belatedly that the image has some unhappy associations), I mean the good bricklayer, not worrying about the styles of architecture or letting values, but setting well-baked brick on brick in good tenacious mortar, and giving the whole of his skill to the task, until the complete house solid and four-square emerges from his

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

hands. That is the way in which many of our best scholars have worked.

I expect you have been waiting to hear me utter that ominous word—'discipline'. I know it has no grateful sound in students' ears, because they seem to regard it as merely equivalent to saying 'Don't do that !' But really this view is not quite fair to the word : archaically it means 'learning', ordinarily it means 'ordered learning', and only incidentally does it connote correction or punishment. Those who preach discipline generally dwell on the moral benefits which it confers upon those disciplined. I too believe in those ; but I am not going to labour the point, because you have probably heard enough of it already. I want you to think of discipline not as a matter of external restraint but of internal grace, indeed as a necessary factor in any worthy achievement. Co-ordination, evenness, unity, economy of time and effort for actual results—these are the fruits of it. Let me cite two witnesses whose words ought to carry weight with you. When Mr. Chintamani, who was afterwards Minister for Education in these Provinces, came back from England about 1919, I remember his telling me how immensely he had been impressed by the self-imposed discipline of the people as making for efficiency. My other witness is the late Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu. I was standing alongside him on the deck of a cruiser during the war, and I shall never forget how he broke out in words of admiration as the blue-jackets went smartly to their posts and

put the ship in fighting-trim the moment she left harbour. You do not get high efficiency like that by any system of repression and punishment. The sense of the value of discipline is deep-seated in the men themselves. It is just the same with a university. Teachers cannot give, nor can students receive, up to their full capacity without it. Therefore I say cultivate discipline, if for no better reason, as a most valuable ingredient in success.

When I ask principals and lecturers whether their pupils are industrious and work hard, I am confidently assured that they work very hard indeed. I will not let the fact that they always seem ready to ask for holidays outweigh that assurance in my mind. I believe that there is no reason then for me to say, 'be diligent.' I will rather say, 'do not work too hard.' Do not overtask brain and eye. You have got to keep a reserve of strength and vitality wherewith to grow. University days ought to be in India, as they are elsewhere, one of the happiest times in a man's life : a time of cheerfulness and expansion when one makes new friends and is conscious of new stirrings and new capacities and realizes the pleasure of living. Exercise and games are as necessary to the healthy student as meat and drink. I am not thinking entirely of games which encourage combination and exalt the cause above the prize, though everyone knows the virtue of them. But as an American public man pointed out the other day, games are good' because, as the saying

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

goes, 'they take it out of us.' What they take out is something of that impulse to conflict which is strong within us all from the cradle. If that old instinct cannot find a safe outlet, it will break out in restlessness and unhappiness, in quarrels and useless violence of thought and action. Debates are another healthy way of working off the same impulse. But when we have summed up all that the class-room, the hostel, and the playing-field can provide—the interchange of views, the talks with tutors, the development of wind and sinew as well as of mind, there is still room for the individual to treat himself. It is wise to have some private diversion of one's own. I notice that people who can go and watch little birds through field-glasses or who collect flowers are generally quite happy about it. There is much to be said for photography; something to be said for keeping a diary; something even to be said for collecting postage stamps, if only you are keen enough. One innocent and useful recreation is to keep that despised thing, a commonplace book, and to record as you meet them the striking events or sayings of the hour. There is always so much worth garnering by the wayside which we let go for want of method. In particular I beg you, cherish the amusing things: there is great virtue in laughter, and a store of humour will be a help to you when things go wrong.

This brings me to my last point. I believe that my honourable colleague, the Minister for Education, is absolutely right in saying that we do not

give beauty its due place in education. Certainly if I had the money and power to complete this university in brick and stone, I would give you not merely laboratories and class-rooms, but art and music too. One sees that the need exists. It is the hunger after colour and form that is partly responsible for the prints which hang in hostels and common-rooms. I do not wish to criticize them ; but who would deny they might easily be much better? I would like to see the walls of university rooms furnished with really good photographs of the great Indian monuments : the Taj Mahal and the Kutb Minar ; the Black Pagoda and the Kailasa Temple ; the stupas and carvings of Sanchi. There should be casts of all the finest statues, and good prints in colour of the great Ajunta frescoes and the best work of the modern artists. And I would like to see these multiplied in smaller reproductions so that they should find their way first into students' rooms and so gradually into the better class homes of India. Taste is formed by dwelling on beauty, and with a sense for beauty comes a happiness that is certainly not of earth, but as it were a gift of the gods.

## ALL-INDIA MUSIC CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW

January 9, 1925

YOUR music, I am told, has a long unbroken tradition ; it has been described as running in a continuing stream, impersonal, single-purposed,

self-forgetting. You trace its origin to the Vedas ; and its main development on the theoretic side to the work of Hindu scholars. Yet some of its finest practitioners have been Mussulmans. The artist whose name is most widely known through India was Tansen, musician at the court of Akbar, to whose memorial shrine in Gwalior the musical world of India still pays homage. Rai Rajeshwar Bali well said yesterday that art was good because it was a healer of differences : and the truth of his saying is shown by the way in which in this world of music, any discords of religion, race or sect have been drowned in a concord of sweet sounds.

But, if I mistake not, this ancient and honourable art has in these times fallen upon evil days. My colleague referred yesterday to a feature of modern India which disquieted him—the lack of interest in æsthetics shown by people who have received a good education and might be expected to appreciate and to encourage the arts. I gather that his complaint is as true of music as it is of painting. The practice of music has fallen nowadays into the hands of a special class, lacking social status or enlightenment, who cannot be expected to realize the potential wealth of their inheritance, and have not got it in their power to reclaim the art from its less reputable concomitants, to call forth all its latent virtues and to seat it again upon a throne of honour. You know the story how the court musicians who had just been cashiered by the austere Aurangzeb arranged a



sham funeral procession and set up loud cries of lamentation. The emperor asked what the noise was all about, and they told him, 'Music is dead and we are taking her to her grave.' 'Then mind you bury her deep,' was his answer. I can imagine that a cultured lover of Indian music may sometimes feel that Aurangzeb's orders have in the sequel been only too effectually obeyed.

Surely it is sad that so noble an art should not be generally honoured and cultivated throughout the land. Of all arts music is the primal, the most instinctive and spontaneous expression of human emotion. Time and again in history we read how music has brought out the inner soul of a people and encouraged them to lofty endeavour : we think of Tyrtaeus, of the Welsh bards, of Highland pipers, of the Marseillaise. I remember being told by an old French tutor, who had served in the Franco-Prussian War, that 'God Save the King' (which he detested because of its Teutonic origin) always depressed him to the verge of tears, whereas when the Marseillaise was played the very horses on the parade ground started champing their bits and pawing the earth. Indeed we can hardly speak of music's power of playing on the human heart—its power of arousing, ennobling, cheering, comforting, healing and (it must be added) enervating and debasing also—without falling into some well-known quotation from the poets. I think hastily of Congreve, Dryden, Pope, Milton and *Twelfth Night* ; but I suppress all their sentiments in favour of the profundity of meaning in Portia's

saying: 'I am never merry when I hear sweet music.'

Elsewhere in the world, and especially on the continent of Europe, this capacity of music for developing the finer sensibilities of man is thoroughly appreciated; and the study of the art in all its branches is highly developed and systematized. You find schools of music and opera houses in all large centres, concerts in every town of any size, an instrument of some kind in almost every home. Of late years new ingenious devices have lent their artful aid. The mechanical reproduction of music by means of gramophones and broadcasting may offend the purist; but it must have done much for the musical education of many who without them would have indolently remained in outer darkness. There are phases of what passes for modern music about which, if I spoke at all, I should speak harshly. None the less it comes near platitude to say that a wealth of music widely diffused, readily accessible, is an immense asset in the mental wealth and happiness of a people.

And to particularize, I suggest that music is the natural accomplishment of women all the world over, perhaps because their response to emotional stimulus is finer and readier than that of grosser-fibred men. For many of us I am sure, among the keenest pleasures of our lives has been listening to some simple song or instrumental music in our homes. It seems a tragedy that in this country social custom should practically have cut

off women of the better classes from developing their natural gifts for music, and from contributing to the culture of their home-folk.

Let me give you one more reason why music should be treasured. I am told that your Vaishnavite literature is almost a series of lyrical rhapsodies in which the poet musician aspires to lose himself in the divine. But not in India alone, but as I believe everywhere in the world, has music been vitally associated with verse. It seems to be true that all poetry rose in the beginning out of music : that the first poets sang their words to the harp or some such instrument, and the first choruses sang as they danced ; from which simple fact we may trace the derivation of all the essential differences between poetry and prose. It is just because poetry is based on music—music which persuades through emotion, and not through reason—that the language of poetry is keyed higher than that of prose. Because of its association with music, poetry must have metre, which is beat ; it may or may not rhyme, but its rhythms and harmonies must strike the ear more audibly than those of prose ; even the order of its words will be different ; because these are the consequences, the modes of expression, of the emotional element which music has left as a legacy to verse. So long as music is disregarded and unhonoured in a country, there seems small hope for the future of its indigenous poetry.

I know much too little about music to attempt to touch upon differences between West and East :

## HINDUSTANI ACADEMY, LUCKNOW

and that is why I have spoken of its essential values, which must, since all true art strikes deep down into the consciousness of men, under any variety of inflexion, be the same. Let me only say that, ignorant as I am of Indian music, I am yet very glad to have had this opportunity of supporting your courageous efforts to resuscitate the art which you love. I congratulate you on the success which so satisfactory an attendance of musicians and lovers of music promises to yield. I can understand your pride in your heritage. I can respect your desire to see India make her own peculiar contribution to the common stock of art and beauty in the world, while remaining true to her own genius and abiding by her own honourable traditions.

## HINDUSTANI ACADEMY, LUCKNOW

March 29, 1927

THE institution which we formally inaugurate today is the youngest of three enterprises which owe their origin to my colleague, the Education Minister's love of the arts and letters of his country. He had already initiated a gallery of Indian painting and a college of Indian music. He has now addressed himself to the cause of vernacular literature. He seeks to stimulate interest and activity in the writing and reading of Urdu and Hindi, to safeguard the purity of the language and to raise the standard of books

written in it. But if I understand him aright, his purposes are not merely those of the scholar, but those of the statesman too. He seeks to provide people in these provinces with what in many countries is regarded as almost as natural an endowment as the air of heaven itself, a generous heritage of books in their mother tongue to which ordinary people can turn for profit and enjoyment. . . . .

In the first place, I plead for real enthusiasm and personal effort. For the Fellowship roll of the Academy we have tried to enlist many of those who are most competent to help throughout the province. I hope that they will all regard themselves as personal propagandists in a good cause, and that all, singly as well as collectively will do their best to help. Some of them can deliver addresses or read papers on literary topics within their special ken, some can interest themselves in the formation of reading circles in towns; some can take a personal interest in the travelling libraries or village libraries. I prefer to think of the Academy not as an isolated institution, but as part and parcel of that concentrated movement, of the need for which I have spoken before now, for the vivification and enlightenment of the whole countryside. I hope that every member of the Academy will feel that he has a real and important cause to fight for. I have no hope that much will come of the movement if it lacks the impulse of personal enthusiasm; and if it is forced to fall back for its effects mainly upon the headquarters

meetings of the executive committee and the conduct of correspondence by the permanent staff.

Secondly, I should like to see it arranged, by legislation if necessary, for a copy of every vernacular book published in the United Provinces to be sent to the Academy; and for the Academy, by such arrangement, combined I hope with judicious weeding, to get together a comprehensive library of all the best vernacular books. It might also, I suggest, undertake in future the annual review of vernacular publications, an enterprise which the Government seem of late years to have abandoned—possibly, for reasons of economy. If the Academy succeeds in pronouncing a just and critical review of the important productions of the year it will do much to establish itself in men's respect. I think it worth consideration, too, whether the Academy, following the French example, might not eventually adopt the practice of 'crowning' a few works of outstanding merit, provided that the honour were rigidly restricted to books of quite unusual quality.

A subsidiary, but not a trivial point is, I think, that the Academy should insist on quality as well as quantity—in the production of books. There are some excellent printing presses in the province, and I have noticed a great improvement in much of their output during recent years. That is a very favourable sign, by which we ought to profit. I know that prices must be kept down if many people are to buy; but within

economic limits let me put in a word for having good print and better paper—and, when illustrations are desirable, better drawn pictures too.

To come to my main point, however, it seems to me that the outstanding need of the moment is to stimulate the production of good original books. I devoutly hope that the Academy will not tend to become mainly a factory of works for the consideration of textbook committees. . . . I hope that the production of translations will never be more than a secondary activity—a by-product—of the Academy. I hope that it will concentrate upon the production of original books : books which are essentially Indian, and indeed primarily provincial, in thought. Its function, as I see it, is not so much to attend to the forms of language or to convey technical knowledge, as to foster a literature. And if that literature is to be a living, beneficial thing it must be no parasite, but an independent growth. There is already too much that is derivative about our Hindi and Urdu books.

The great development of modern literature in Western countries in recent times has been the amazing spread of the novel. We are inclined, perhaps, to disparage fiction, except at the hands of a few admitted masters ; and to treat it as the nearest literary approach to the cinema ; a series of moving pictures which flatters the senses while making the smallest possible appeal to the judgement. I cannot deny that some modern best-sellers deserve so hard a judgement. But the

novel takes many forms ; and the novel which makes the best appeal is not the narrative of history or adventure or crime, but the story of the ordinary man. Most readers enjoy reading about other people of a like kind to themselves, because they feel as if they were enlarging their acquaintance and experience, making new friends, seeing new lights on life and enriching their own personal content. 'We ourselves can only lead one life, but by virtue of books we can live thousands of lives.' We read to escape from our own dullness or depression, our own penury, our own too tame affairs. Apart from any reasons of training or development, men need to read as a recreation, a relaxation, and a happiness. For this service the novel is particularly effective. The good story always holds the reader by making him feel that he is part of what he is reading ; the hero's difficulties and blunders and successes are his own. Now, apart from all other reasons why we have so little original vernacular literature—such as the want of a leisured class and the lack of a reading habit—may not one reason be that people have not yet succeeded in producing the right sort of story for the Indian reading public? We want to encourage travelling libraries and village libraries. But I am told that there is a great dearth of good books suitable for the purpose. Why should this necessarily be so? No one imagines that Indians are indifferent to narrative. We know that they are not. Perhaps they have been offered the wrong sort of matter. I have seen ingenious



adaptations to an Indian setting of up-to-date Western stories of adventure and crime retold in the vernacular ; and I have seen stories of Indian domestic life written in a form of English which seems to be modelled on rubbishy bookstall magazines. Both struck me as exotic and almost as unhealthy. But is there any reason why natural and sincere stories should not be written and read in the vernacular about the ordinary things of Indian life? The subject matter is surely rich enough. The battle with nature in this country is as keen and adventurous as in the Western states of America, where it has been almost epically treated. The struggle for livelihood or learning is as real and inspiring as it has been for generations of Scottish students. There must be room for stories which would bring out the strong appeal of religion to the Indian mind. The perennial problems of life—birth, death, marriage and the upbringing of children—have an interest which transcends the bounds of geography and time. The characters to be found among our people—the country gentleman, the yeoman farmer, the lawyer, the merchant, the journalist, the returned soldier, the student, the saint, and last, but not least, the various types of sinners—are just as rich in literary value as in the pages of Scott or Balzac. It needs, I believe, only the understanding and the sympathy of the artist to turn them into books which will go to the heart of the people, books which people will buy and read because they satisfy a personal need.

I have dwelt first upon the possibilities of indigenous fiction, because it seems to me the readiest, the widest, and the most fruitful field of all to cultivate. Next to it may we not hope to see the national life enriched with a great development of vernacular poetry? The spirit of men is stirring, imagination is awake ; why should not feeling express itself in worthy poems? I am told that our vernacular poetry at present runs mainly to narrative verse, and is either too literary for the masses, or else is too much like doggerel for the lovers of letters. If indigenous poetry is to have a future, I think that conscious effort may be needed, on the one hand, to get away from the language of convention which, perhaps from old association with court life, characterizes some Indian poetry, and on the other hand to give purity of form and breadth of content to the very rough verse of common consumption. I speak subject to correction from those who can judge far better than I can, but it seems to me that the simple songs of the countryside are in some ways a clearer fount of inspiration than some of the recognized masters. Or at least I think there is some basis for that suggestion in the way in which some of our purer English lyrics of today derive their inspiration from Elizabethan days. There is natural beauty enough in India to inspire men to song. I hope that the Academy will seek out and encourage her singers.

On the subject of translations I have already touched with some reserve. They may be a

utilitarian necessity ; but never let us mistake them for really creative activity. I incline to believe that in so far as you encourage translation you may positively impede higher work. The vital thing surely is not to find your words for other people's ideas, but to find your own ideas as well as your own words in which to put them. But if translations into the vernacular there must be, then I hope that the Academy will look closely to one point. Translation is a relatively ignoble office ; its one faint hope of acquiring merit lies in its being decently done. But the work can never be well done if it is entrusted to hack writers, however well-intentioned or deserving. Mechanical reproduction is lifeless, and may even be life-destroying. Let us be sure that the translator of a technical book knows not merely his Urdu and Hindi, but also thoroughly understands the subject which he is handling ; and let his performance be appraised by judges with similar knowledge.

Let us pass on to another point. The Government resolution which created the Academy recognizes Urdu and Hindi as twin vernaculars of the province, and embraces them both in the possibly unscientific but innocuous title of Hindustani. Now, if I believed that one untoward consequence of the Academy's creation would be to blow up the embers of linguistic controversy, I might have left my colleague's scheme severely alone. I do not believe that any such consequence ought to ensue. Rai Rajeshar Bali said

of music, I remember, that in its harmonies all political discords were drowned ; the Muse came to bring peace on earth and not dissension. So should it be also with the noble service of letters. Speech was given to men for intercourse and not for severance. . . .

If Hindi and Urdu are to yield their best, they must each enjoy a natural freedom of growth. Nonetheless, let us, as practical men, consider carefully what reactions may ensue unless we guard against them. There is a risk that literary gains may be offset by civic losses. Divergence of language, in so far as it weakens the link between Hindu and Muslim in northern India, is in itself no blessing ; but if attempts were made deliberately to further the divergence for political ends, I should be prepared to denounce them as a form of treason to the commonwealth. The matter is palpably not one for rule or definition. It must be left to the good sense and moderation of all concerned. The ideal would be for every writer in Hindi to write as if he wished to find Muslim readers, and vice versa. That may be too much to hope for. But it is not too much to hope that the Academy will set its face firmly against any attempts to give either branch of the vernacular a distinctly sectarian, and therefore a non-popular, form. If, for example, Urdu writers import into current literature highly artificial Arabic phrases, such as some of those which used to embellish police diaries when I last heard them read some years ago ; or if Hindi authors

strain themselves to load their vocabulary with heavy elements of Sanskrit, then they both are committing a twofold misdemeanour. In the first place, they are deliberately pulling themselves and their readers a step further away from the other half of the community. That, no doubt, is an offence against civic relations rather than against literature. But in the process they are also making their books incomprehensible to the average man; and that is a sin against the aims and objects of the Academy, which I trust that its governing body will be strict to reprehend.

It remains for me only to congratulate my colleague upon his new venture; to congratulate ourselves upon having secured for the presidency of the new Academy so eminent a lover of literature and so distinguished a man of affairs as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru; to thank him and his colleagues upon the Council for having accepted office; to declare the Academy duly inaugurated; and to express a heartfelt hope that, under the wise guidance which it will enjoy, it may be the means of vastly encouraging and uplifting the vernacular literature of the United Provinces, and of bringing the blessings of books written in their own tongue to tens of thousands of new readers. If it can do that, it will come to be acknowledged as by no means least among the beneficent agencies of the present time.

From *The Speeches of Sir William Marris*

# HILAIRE BELLOC

## THE ONION-EATER

THERE is a hill not far from my home whence it is possible to see northward and southward such a stretch of land as is not to be seen from any eminence among those I know in Western Europe. Southward the sea-plain and the sea standing up in a belt of light against the sky, and northward all the weald.

From this summit the eye is disturbed by no great cities of the modern sort, but a dozen at least of those small market towns which are the delight of South England hold the view from point to point, from the pale blue downs of the island over, eastward, to the Kentish hills.

A very long way off, and near the sea-line, the high faint spire of that cathedral which was once the mother of all my country goes up without weight into the air and gathers round it the delicate and distant outlines of the landscape—as, indeed, its builders meant that it should do. In such a spot, on such a high watch-tower of England, I met, three days ago, a man.

I had been riding my kind and honourable horse for two hours, broken, indeed, by a long rest in a deserted barn.

I had been his companion, I say, for two hours, and had told him a hundred interesting things—to which he had answered nothing at all—when I took him along a path that neither of us yet had trod. I had not, I know; he had not (I think), for he went snorting and doubtfully. This path broke up from the kennels near Waltham, and made for the High Wood between Gumber and No Man's Land. It went over dead leaves and quite lonely to the thick of the forest; there it died out into a vaguer and a vaguer trail. At last it ceased altogether, and for half an hour or so I pushed carefully, always climbing upwards, through the branches, and picked my way along the bramble-shoots, until at last I came out upon that open space of which I have spoken, and which I have known since my childhood. As I came out of the wood the south-west wind met me, full of the Atlantic, and it seemed to me to blow from Paradise.

I remembered, as I halted and so gazed north and south to the weald below me, and then again to the sea, the story of that Sultan who publicly proclaimed that he had possessed all power on earth, and had numbered on a tablet with his own hand each of his happy days, and had found them, when he came to die, to be seventeen. I knew what that heathen had meant, and I looked into my heart as I remembered the story, but I came back from the examination satisfied, for 'so far', I said to myself, 'this day is among my number, and the light is falling. I will count it for one.'

## THE ONION-EATER

It was then that I saw before me, going easily and slowly across the downs, the figure of a man.

He was powerful, full of health and easy ; his clothes were rags ; his face was open and bronzed. I came at once off my horse to speak with him, and, holding my horse by the bridle, I led it forward till we met. Then I asked him whither he was going, and whether, as I knew these open hills by heart, I could not help him on his way.

He answered me that he was in no need of help, for he was bound nowhere, but that he had come up off the high road on to the hills in order to get his pleasure and also to see what there was on the other side. He said to me also, with evident enjoyment (and in the accent of a lettered man), 'This is indeed a day to be alive!'

I saw that I had here some chance of an adventure, since it is not every day that one meets upon a lonely down a man of culture, in rags and happy. I therefore took the bridle right off my horse and let him nibble, and I sat down on the bank of the Roman road holding the leather of the bridle in my hand, and wiping the bit with plucked grass. The stranger sat down beside me, and drew from his pocket a piece of bread and a large onion. We then talked of those things which should chiefly occupy mankind : I mean, of happiness and of the destiny of the soul. Upon these matters I found him to be exact, thoughtful, and just.

First, then, I said to him : 'I also have been full of gladness all this day, and, what is more, as I came up the hill from Waltham I was inspired



to verse, and wrote it inside my mind, completing a passage I had been working at for two years, upon joy. But it was easy for me to be happy, since I was on a horse and warm and well fed; yet even for me such days are capricious. I have known but few in my life. They are each of them distinct and clear, so rare are they, and (what is more) so different are they in their very quality from all other days.'

'You are right,' he said, 'in this last phrase of yours. . . They are indeed quite other from all the common days of our lives. But you were wrong, I think, in saying that your horse and clothes and good feeding and the rest had to do with these curious intervals of content. Wealth makes the run of our days somewhat more easy, poverty makes them more hard—or very hard. But no poverty has ever yet brought of itself despair into the soul—the men who kill themselves are neither rich nor poor. Still less has wealth ever purchased those peculiar hours. I also am filled with their spirit today, and God knows,' said he, cutting his onion in two, so that it gave out a strong savour, 'God knows I can purchase nothing.'

'Then tell me,' I said, 'whence do you believe these moments come? And will you give me half your onion?'

'With pleasure,' he replied, 'for no man can eat a whole onion; and as for that other matter, why I think the door of heaven is ajar from time to time, and that light shines out upon us for a

moment between its opening and closing.' He said this in a merry, sober manner ; his black eyes sparkled, and his large beard was blown about a little by the wind. Then he added : 'If a man is a slave to the rich in the great cities (the most miserable of mankind), yet these days come to him. To the vicious wealthy and privileged men, whose faces are stamped hard with degradation, these days come ; they come to you, you say, working (I suppose) in anxiety like most of men. They come to me who neither work nor am anxious so long as South England may freely import onions.'

'I believe you are right,' I said. 'And I especially commend you for eating onions ; they contain all health ; they induce sleep ; they may be called the apples of content, or, again, the companion fruits of mankind.'

'I have always said,' he answered gravely, 'that when the couple of them left Eden they hid and took away with them an onion. I am moved in my soul to have known a man who reveres and loves them in the due measure, for such men are rare.'

Then he asked, with evident anxiety : 'Is there no inn about here where a man like me will be taken in?'

'Yes,' I told him. 'Down under the Combe at Duncton is a very good inn. Have you money to pay?—Will you take some of my money?'

'I will take all you can possibly afford me,' he answered in a cheerful, manly fashion. I counted out my money and found I had on me but three

shillings and sevenpence. 'Here is three shillings and sevenpence,' I said.

'Thank you, indeed,' he answered, taking the coins and wrapping them in a little rag (for he had no pockets, but only holes).

'I wish,' I said with regret, 'we might meet and talk more often of many things. So much do we agree, and men like you and me are often lonely.'

He shrugged his shoulders and put his head on one side, quizzing at me with his eyes. Then he shook his head decidedly, and said: 'No, no—it is certain that we shall never meet again.' And thanking me with great fervour, but briefly, he went largely and strongly down the escarpment of the Combe to Duncton and the weald; and I shall never see him again till the Great Day. . . .

*From Hills and the Sea*

## THE GOOD WOMAN

UPON a hill that overlooks a western plain and is conspicuous at the approach of evening, there still stands a house of faded brick faced with cornerings of stone. It is quite empty, but yet not deserted. In each room some little furniture remains; all the pictures are upon the walls; the deep red damask of the panels is not faded, or if faded, shows no contrast of brighter patches, for nothing has been removed from the walls.

## THE GOOD WOMAN

Here it is possible to linger for many hours alone, and to watch the slope of the hill under the level light as the sun descends. Here passes a woman of such nobility that, though she is dead, the landscape and the vines are hers.

It was in September, during a silence of the air, that I first saw her as she moved among her possessions ; she was smiling to herself as though at a memory, but her smile was so slight and so dignified, so genial, and yet so restrained, that you would have thought it part of everything around and married (as she was) to the land which was now her own. She wandered down the garden paths ruling the flowers upon either side, and receiving as she went autumn and the fruition of her fields ; plenitude and completion surrounded her ; the benediction of Almighty God must have been upon her, for she was the fulfilment of her world.

Three fountains played in that garden—two, next to the northern and the southern walls, were small and low ; they rather flowed than rose. Two cones of marble received their fall, and over these they spread in an even sheet with little noise, making (as it were) a sheath of water which covered all the stone ; but the third sprang into the air with delicate triumph, fine and high, satisfied, tenuous and exultant. This one tossed its summit into the light, and, alone of the things in the garden, the plash of its waters recalled and suggested activity—though that in so discreet a way that it was to be heard rather than regarded. The

birds flew far off in circles over the roofs of the town below us. Very soon they went to their rest.

The slow transfiguration of the light by which the air became full of colours and every outline merged into the evening, made of all I saw, as I came up towards her, a soft and united vision wherein her advancing figure stood up central and gave a meaning to the whole. I will not swear that she did not as she came bestow as well as receive an influence of the sunset. It was said by the ancients that virtue is active, an agent, and has power to control created things ; for, they said, it is in a direct relation with whatever orders and has ordained the general scheme. Such power, perhaps, resided in her hands. It would have awed me but hardly astonished if, as the twilight deepened, the inclination of the stems had obeyed her gesture and she had put the place to sleep.

As I came near I saw her plainly. Her face was young although she was so wise, but its youth had the aspect of a divine survival. Time adorned it.

Music survives. Whatever is eternal in the grace of simple airs or in the Christian innocence of Mozart was apparent, nay, had increased, in her features as the days in passing had added to them not only experience but also revelation and security. She was serene. The posture of her head was high, and her body, which was visibly informed by an immortal spirit, had in its carriage

## THE GOOD WOMAN

a large, a regal, an uplifted bearing which even now as I write of it, after so many years, turns common every other sight that has encountered me. This was the way in which I first saw her upon her own hillside at evening.

With every season I returned. And with every season she greeted my coming with a more generous and a more vivacious air. I think the years slipped off and did not add themselves upon her mind: the common doom of mortality escaped her until, perhaps, its sign was imposed upon her hair—for this at last was touched all through with that appearance or gleam which might be morning or which might be snow.

She was able to conjure all evil. Those desperate enemies of mankind which lie in siege of us all around grew feeble and were silent when she came. Nor has any other force than hers dared to enter the rooms where she had lived: it is her influence alone which inhabits them today. There is a vessel of copper, enamelled in green and gilded, which she gave with her own hands to a friend overseas. I have twice touched it in an evil hour.

Strength, sustenance, and a sacramental justice are permanent in such lives, and such lives also attain before their close to so general a survey of the world that their appreciations are at once accurate and universal.

On this account she did not fail in any human conversation, nor was she ever for a

moment less than herself ; but always and throughout her moods her laughter was unexpected and full, her fear natural, her indignation glorious.

Above all, her charity extended like a breeze ; it enveloped everything she knew. The sense of destiny faded from me as the warmth of that charity fell upon my soul ; the foreknowledge of death retreated, as did every other unworthy panic.

She drew the objects of her friendship into something new ; they breathed an air from another country, so that those whom she deigned to regard were, compared with other men, like the living compared with the dead ; or, better still, they were like men awake while the rest were tortured by dreams and haunted of the unreal. Indeed, she had a word given to her which saved all the souls of her acquaintance.

It is not true that influence of this sort decays or passes into vaguer and vaguer depths of memory. It does not dissipate. It is not dissolved. It does not only spread and broaden : it also increases with the passage of time. The musicians bequeath their spirit, notably those who have loved delightful themes and easy melodies. The poets are read for ever ; but those who resemble her do more, for they grow out upon the centuries—they themselves and not their arts continue. There is stuff in their legend. They are a tangible inheritance for the hurrying generations of men.

## THE GOOD WOMAN

She was of this kind. She was certainly of this kind. She died upon this day<sup>1</sup> in the year 1892. In these lines I perpetuate her memory.

<sup>1</sup> December 22

From *Hills and the Sea*



# ESSAYS FROM 'THE TIMES'

## CHILDISHNESS

MAN, whatever else he has done, has never yet adapted himself to that struggle for life which is supposed to be his main business on earth. He is continually forced into it, but always absent-minded about it; and it is in fits of absence of mind that he does the things of which he is most proud. Nor do we at all admire or like those men who have adapted themselves most thoroughly to the struggle for life. It is true that biographies of them are written which insist that they are all they should be; but in spite of those biographies we forget them as soon as we can. We choose rather to remember some one notorious for his forgetfulness of the struggle for life, some one who, as we say, was a child in matters of the world and who managed, in verse or prose, to express his determined childishness for our everlasting delight.

You cannot write poetry about your success in the struggle for life; but you can write it about those things which have made you care nothing for it, about such trifles as the dew that sat in Julia's hair or such unrealities as the land of dreams, beyond the light of the morning star; and those things, if you have the gift for them, may

remain familiar to many generations. Indeed there is a longer life for mere childish jingles like 'Hush-a-by baby on the tree-top' than for the memory of any man who ever made a fortune by strict application to business. Sir Richard Whittington, it is true, did that and is still remembered ; but it is because he had a cat and because he heard the bells saying, 'Turn again, Whittington,' not because he became Lord Mayor of London.

The child comes into the world ready to think of anything rather than the struggle for life ; and this irrelevance of his delights us even when we have been subdued ourselves into complete relevance. All the queer unworldly mistakes of children not only amuse but charm us, for they set us remembering wistfully the time when we ourselves could make them. We still enjoy the story of Whittington, because he rose to fame and fortune not through his industry but through his cat, and because he was one to whom the bells could sing a song. They sang songs for us when we were children ; and the world then was a place in which things might happen to us as they happened to Whittington—a place in which cats might talk and flowers had faces and children might come out of the pictures on the wall and play with us, and wonderful things happened in the garden at night, and always beyond the hills that we could see from our nursery window. We had learnt nothing then about cause and effect, and how they make the unexpected merely disagreeable. We might not believe in magic or fairies ; but there was

no need to believe in them, for what we saw and did was just as wonderful as anything could be that we never saw or did. Indeed, it may be that all the stories of magic and fairies are only efforts made by men to prolong their childish wonder when they grow up. They cannot find it any longer in what is familiar, so they try to believe in another unfamiliar life all about them but unseen. It is not the children who make fairy stories, but the grown-ups. They people the flowers with those little imaginary creatures because the flowers themselves no longer have faces for them, as the bells say no words. And they tell their stories to the children because they want to see some one believe them ; but the children neither believe nor disbelieve. For them there need be nothing beyond the flowers themselves and the places where they know to find them.

Yet there are people who keep their childhood all their lives without trying to believe in fairies. They are not fools or under any illusion about the nature of things that the rest of us can detect ; and, if they are irrelevant as regards the struggle for life, they seem to have a relevance of their own, which we recognize even if we do not know its subject. And we recognize it because we remember it from our own childhood, when there was much more relevance in life for us than there is now. For in our hearts we all believe the struggle for life to be irrelevant ; and when Mozart, or any other of the unsubdued children, calls us away from it with his songs, we listen even if we do

## MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETIES

not follow ; and we know that he, for all his carelessness, has a more serious business than our own. For in the music of these children there is both seriousness and carelessness ; and they laugh, not at things, but with them. There is no bitterness in their laughter, for what they dislike they forget. And this they can do because the flowers have not lost their faces for them, or the bells their speech, because all the things that can be loved are alive to them, and the others are dead.

We cannot understand how Mozart got all his music out of life ; but if we were still children we should understand, for then, if we had had his gift, we too could have turned everything to music, even our sorrows that came and went like rain on a June night ; and after them there was more scent in the garden than before. He could weep, as he could laugh, better than anyone else ; for sorrow meant something to him as much as laughter and everything meant something, except that irrelevance of the struggle for life which insists to us that it is the only relevant thing.

## MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETIES

THERE is something peculiarly irritating in mutual admiration societies, to those who are outside them, just as there is often something irritating in the infatuation of lovers. But we bear with lovers because we all have been, or are, or may be in love ; whereas most of us at least pretend that we would scorn to belong to a mutual admira-

tion society. We would rather be like the miller who cared for nobody and nobody cared for him. He was jolly because he had no illusions, whereas mutual admiration societies seldom seem jolly to outsiders and thrive upon illusions. It is the illusions that irritate us ; we long to dispel them, to tell A that B is not a genius, but rather below the average both in wits and in looks. And we are sure that A would not believe us, only because he barter admiration with B and will not get it unless he gives it. That is where we make the mistake, for the theory of the Social Contract will no more apply to mutual admiration societies than to society at large. They also are not made, but grow. They may be based upon illusion ; but, if they are, it follows that the illusion must be honest, for no one, however hungry of admiration, could enjoy it if he knew it was unreal. It is in this respect, being mutual, utterly different from flattery. For flattery, however gross or insincere, is always a tribute to our importance. Though we know that the flatterer does not mean what he says, still he would not flatter us at all if we were not worth flattery ; and by doing so he confesses his own inferiority. But the members of a mutual admiration society are on equal terms. They give and take, not flattery, but admiration ; and that admiration, if not sincere, is of no significance whatever. There may be some exaggeration in their expression of it, the exaggeration that is constantly produced by the action of mind upon mind, and by a sense of general agreement in any

## MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETIES

body of men ; but exaggeration is an utterly different thing from pure fiction, being usually unconscious in all its stages.

The fact is, there is usually something ignoble in our irritation at mutual admiration societies, and in our itch to dispel their illusions ; something of the ugly impulse that set Iago plotting against Othello and Desdemona. We are envious of a little world within the world, whose inhabitants seem to have some faith, some secret of power, denied to the rest of us. For there can be no doubt that mutual admiration societies have a secret of power, and that the members of them often accomplish what they could never have done alone. When they do great things they are no longer accused of mutual admiration, as treason, when it prospers, is not called treason ; for then the world admits that the mutual admiration was justified, however absurd it may have seemed beforehand.

But mutual admiration societies are justified, not merely by the quality of their members, but by the effect they often have upon members who alone would have done nothing. Take the case of the Pre-Raphaelites, not merely the brotherhood, but all of those who came under the influence of Rossetti. How many of them were raised above their natural powers by the association with him and with each other, which certainly was based upon a very strong system of mutual admiration ? To Rossetti geese of the right kind were always swans ; and often they turned into swans for a time at his bidding. So and so, he would say,

was a 'stunner', and must be an artist ; and the wonder was that so and so did often become an artist of some merit, to fall back into mediocrity as soon as he fell out of that society. They all, at any rate, had the benefit of a clear direction. Rossetti told them that art was the only thing worth having in life, and he also told them how to set about producing it. They found salvation of a kind with Rossetti for their prophet, and their lives were heightened by finding it.

But from the first even the most mediocre of them were redeemed from complete mediocrity by the fact that they could recognize a prophet in Rossetti, and could submit themselves to him ; and this common fact was no doubt the real basis of their mutual admiration. It was what distinguished them all from the rest of the world ; and there is the same kind of distinction in the members of all mutual admiration societies. To others they will often seem a set of absurd persons making a fuss about nothing. To themselves there must appear to be virtue in each one of them, because he has seen that it is worth while to belong to their brotherhood, although there is no money to be made out of it. For mutual admiration societies are always disinterested in their aim, however narrow and absurd that aim may be ; and that is what makes a brotherhood of them and accounts for their mutual admiration. There is no brotherhood in a limited company ; its members are distinguished by no common desire, except the desire to make money, which is no distinction.

## MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETIES

Anyone who can buy shares can be a member of it, and their association is a mere accident. It is not accident that brings together the members of a mutual admiration society, but common tastes and a common aim, of which mutual admiration is a natural result. For these common tastes and common aims do indeed reveal men to each other and discover their finer qualities ; since it is by reason of their finer qualities that they are brought together. They may idealize each other, but the ideal is based upon reality ; and perhaps they know more of each other, after all, than those who pride themselves on having no delusions about human nature. For it is a deadlier error to mistake swans for geese than to mistake geese for swans, since you can never turn a swan into a goose by mis-calling it.

From *The Times*



# NEVILLE CARDUS

## CRICKET

EVERY summer I travel north, south, east, and west to watch cricket. I have seen the game played far down in Kent, at Dover, near the cliffs trodden by King Lear. There, one late August afternoon, I said good-bye to a cricket season on a field which lay silent in the evening sunshine; the match, the last of the year, was over and the players gone. I stayed for a while in the falling light and saw birds run over the grass as the mists began to spread. That day we had watched Woolley in all his glory, batting his way through a hundred felicitous runs. While he batted, the crowd sat with white tents and banners all around—a blessed scene, wisps of clouds in the sky, green grass for our feet to tread upon, ‘laughter of friends under an English heaven.’ It was all over and gone now, as I stood on the little field alone in the glow of the declining day. ‘The passing of summer,’ I thought. ‘There can be no summer in this land without cricket.’

Whenever I am in love with cricket’s beauty and sentiment I always think of the game as I saw it go to an end that day in Kent, as though to the strain of summer’s cadence. Cricket, as I know and love it, is part of that holiday time which is

the Englishman's heritage—a playtime in a homely countryside. It is a game that seems to me to take on the very colours of the passing months. In the spring, cricketers are fresh and eager; ambition within them breaks into bud; new bats and flannels are as chaste as the April winds. The showers of May drive the players from the field, but soon they are back again, and every blade of grass around them is a jewel in the light. I like this intermittent way of cricket's beginning in spring weather. A season does not burst on us, as football does, full grown and arrogant; it comes to us every year with a modesty that matches the slender tracery of leaf and twig, which belongs to the setting of every true cricket field in the season's first days.

When June arrives, cricket grows to splendour like a rich part of the garden of an English summer time. In June the game is at the crown of the year; from Little Puddleton to London the fields of village and town are white with players in hot action. Batsmen move along their processional way to centuries at Lord's, while in a hundred hidden hamlets far and wide some crude but not inglorious Hobbs flings his bat at the ball, and either misses it or feels his body tingle as willow thwacks leather. Bowlers set their teeth and thunder over the earth, seeing nothing in the world but a middle stump. And when a wicket falls, fieldsmen in the deep give themselves to the grassy earth, stretch limbs, and look up into the blue sky. Now is the time of cricketer's plenty—June

and July. Let him cherish every moment as it passes ; never will he be so young again.

With the advent of August, cricket loses the freshness and radiance of its heyday. Colour and energy begin to leave the game, even as colour and energy begin to leave summer itself. Cricketers grow weary ; ambition wanes as the sun wanes. The season goes to its end with a modest and lovely fall. It does not finish rhetorically, as football does, vaunting a cup-tie final before a million eyes. One after another the cricketers say good-bye in the darkening evenings of late summer ; they fold their tents and depart, and nobody sees them. The noisy crowds have left the game for the new darling with the big ball. Down at Eastbourne (it may chance to be) the season comes to an end on a quiet day, on which the crack of the bat sends out a sweet melancholy. As the cricketer leaves the field, not to set foot again on his game's carpet for months and months to come, he has his moments of private sentiment. He glances back to take a last look at the field as the hours decrease and autumn grows in everything. He is glad that cricket belongs to summer, comes in with the spring, and gets ready to go when the trees are brown. Other games can be played in different parts of the world. Cricket is a game which must always be less than its true self if it is taken out of England and out of the weather of our English summer.

So much for the season and the setting, the time and the place. The game itself is a capricious

## CRICKET

blend of elements, static and dynamic, sensational and somnolent. You can never take your eyes away from a cricket match for fear of missing a crisis. For hours it will proceed to a rhythm as lazy as the rhythm of an airless day. Then we stretch ourselves on deck-chairs and smoke our pipes and talk of a number of things—the old 'uns insisting that in *their* time batsmen used to hit the ball. A sudden bad stroke, a good ball, a marvellous catch, and the crowd is awake; a bolt has been hurled into our midst from a clear sky. When cricket burns a dull slow fire it needs only a single swift wind of circumstance to set everything into a blaze that consumes nerves and senses. In no other game do events of import hang so bodefully on a single act. In no other game does one little mistake lead to mischief so irreparable. You get another chance at football if you fizzle a kick; but Hobbs in all his majesty must pass out of the scene for hours if for a second he should fall into the error that hedges all mortal activity. Many a great match has been lost by a missed catch; terrible are the emotions of long-on when the ball is driven high towards him and when he waits for it—alone in the world—and the crowd roars and somebody cries out, "E'll miss it—e'll miss it!" Years ago, in a match for the rubber in Australia, Clem Hill and Victor Trumper were making a mighty stand, turning the wheel of the game against England. Here were two of the greatest batsmen of all time thoroughly set, scourging the English attack with unsparing weapons.

Hour after hour they cut and drove right and left. Wilfred Rhodes, who seems always to have been playing cricket, tossed up over after over, angling for the catch in the deep. And at the very moment when the fortunes of the battle were on the turn, moving definitely Australia's way—at this moment of fate, Clem Hill let his bat swing at a ball for all he was worth in valour and strength. Up into the sky the ball went, and it began to drop where A. E. Knight was standing. All eyes rested on Knight; the vast Sydney multitude were dead still as the ball fell like a stone. Knight held his catch, but as he did so, he was seen to go down on one knee, and bow his head. Some of the English players, thinking Knight was ill, moved towards him. But as they approached, Knight raised himself, made an explanatory gesture, swallowed emotion in a gulp, and said to his anxious colleagues, 'It's all right, it's all right; I was only thanking my Maker.' Cricket can mean much to a man: responsibility can weigh down the strongest.

The laws of cricket tell of the English love of compromise between a particular freedom and a general orderliness, or legality. Macdonald's best break-back is rendered null and void if he should let his right foot stray merely an inch over the crease as he wheels his arm. Law and order are represented at cricket by the umpires in their magisterial coats (in England it is to be hoped these coats will never be worn as short as umpires wear them in Australia, much to the loss of that

dignity which should always invest dispensers of justice). And in England umpires are seldom mobbed or treated with the contumely which is the lot of the football referee. If everything else in this nation of ours were lost but cricket—her Constitution and the Laws of England of Lord Halsbury—it would be possible to reconstruct from the theory and the practice of cricket all the eternal Englishness which has gone to the establishment of that Constitution and the laws aforesaid.

Where the English language is unspoken there can be no real cricket, which is to say that the Americans have never excelled at the game. In every English village a cricket field is as much part of the landscape as the old church. Everybody born in England has some notion of what is a cricket match, even folks who have never had a cricket bat in their hands in their lives (few must be their number, since it is as natural to give a cricket bat as a present to a little boy as it is to give him a bucket and spade when he goes to the seaside). I should challenge the Englishness of any man who could walk down a country lane, come unexpectedly on a cricket match, and not lean over the fence and watch for a while. Has any true Englishman ever resisted the temptation, while travelling on the railway, to look through the carriage window whenever the train has been passing a cricket field? The train rushes round a curve just as the bowler is about to bowl; in a flash we are swept out of sight of the game, and never can we know what happened to that ball!

Cricket is not called the 'Sport of Kings' ; it is the possession of all of us, high and low, rich and poor. It was born in a small place and it has conquered all the habitations of our race. Wherever cricket is taken, England and the flavours of an English summer go with it. The game's presiding genius is W. G. Grace, dead and therefore immortal. He gave his heart and soul to cricket, stamped the English stamp on it, and caused it to loom with his own genial bulk in the eyes of his countrymen for all time. Today, when it is regarded right and proper for the nation to pay honour to all heroes of the open air, Grace would have been knighted. But the very idea of 'Sir W. G. Grace' is comical. You see, he was an institution. As well might we think of Sir Albert Memorial, Sir National Debt, Sir Harvest Moon—or Sir Cricket !

## NOTES

### JOSEPH ADDISON

JOSEPH ADDISON was born in May 1672. He went to Charterhouse and then to Oxford, where he became a Fellow of Magdalen. In his comparatively short life he held a series of important posts, official and diplomatic, and in 1717 he was appointed Secretary of State. He died in 1719 at the age of forty-seven.

Addison was a most capable man of letters but, as an essayist, he never possessed as much geniality as Steele. He was a man who used literature as a means to preferment. His poem *The Campaign*, which celebrated Marlborough's victory at Blenheim, gained for him a reputation as a poet at a time when little or no great poetry was being written. His plays are not acted today. The best known of them, *Cato*, is remarkable only for its poor characterization and uninteresting plot. All the same it must not be forgotten that, in his day, Addison succeeded in every literary form he essayed. His career in public life was equally successful. The less admirable characteristics of Addison are depicted, with extreme cruelty, by Pope in his portrait of Atticus, in the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*.

Addison's reputation now rests chiefly on his essays. In these he shows remarkable powers of social observation within his chosen limits, command of a prose that is easy enough for the essay yet perfectly classical, much resource in quietly using against social evils the common sense arguments of the worldling, and a gentle appreciation of social comedy. With him, the essay, then a young form, attains at once to balance; his innumerable successors in the eighteenth century either overloaded it with didacticism or failed to give it shape or failed to point its generalities with well-observed particular instances.



## NOTES

### THE INDIAN KINGS

This essay is based on a 'noble hint' thrown out by Swift 'about an Indian supposed to write his travels into England'. This device of looking at one's own country through foreign eyes has been used by Montesquieu in his *Persian Letters* and by Goldsmith in his *Citizen of the World*.

Try to state Addison's views on religion, politics and society directly and without this device and note the loss in effect.

#### PAGE

1. **four Indian kings**: chiefs of North American (Red Indian) tribes, who visited England in 1710.  
**I**: i. e., the Spectator, Addison.  
**isle**: archaic.
2. **article of London**: for 'of London', read 'concerning London'. We should now write 'article on London'.  
**apt**: we should now say 'inclined'.  
**an huge**: we should now say 'a huge'.
3. **on that day**: i.e., on such a seventh day, on a Sunday.  
**man in black**: the clergyman in his black gown.  
**had . . . language**: knew . . . language.
4. **monsters**: which exist only in the imagination of their opponents.  
**withal**: at the same time (archaic).  
**rawboned**: lean.  
**rooms**: i.e., sedan chairs (cf. palankeen).
5. **little black spots**: patches (see No. 81 of *The Spectator*).  
**break out . . . rise . . . wear off**: the Indians thought these spots grew naturally; they were too ugly and absurd to be voluntarily put on.

### THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT

- "6. **Sir Roger**: de Coverley, a country gentleman, of ancient descent and great singularity,

lovingly described in several of *The Spectator* papers.

**Roundhead**: member of the Puritan or Parliamentary Party, and **Cavalier**: member of the Royalist Party, in the seventeenth century.

7. **prick-eared cur**: a puritan, because the ears stood prominently out of close-cropt head. (Re-write the first three sentences in direct speech.)

**good neighbourhood**: friendship among neighbours.

**prejudice**: in the sense of 'increase'.

**game**: birds and animals preserved for hunting.

**There cannot . . . befall**: archaic for 'A greater . . . cannot befall'.

**people**: peoples.

**last degree**: highest degree.

8. **Plutarch**: Greek biographer of the first century A.D. This sentiment is found in his essay 'On the Utility of Enemies'.

**indifferent**: neutral, neither friendly nor hostile.

**malignty**: evil nature.

**that great rule**: 'Love your enemies.' See Matt., v. 43-48, Luke, vi. 27-37.

9. **cried up**: praised unduly.

**object . . . mediums**: e.g., a stick half in water, half in air.

**figure**: (old sense) importance, mark.

**characters**: (old sense) reputations.

**postulatums**: modern 'postulates'; things assumed as basis of reasoning.

10. **cease to be motives of action**: because, whatever they do, those on their side will praise, and those against will blame them.

**Guelfs**: partisans of the Pope, and **Ghibellines**: partisans of the Emperor, in medieval Italy.

**League**: for the support of the Roman Catholic Church, in the sixteenth century.

11. **figures**: (archaic) positions. •

**grateful**: pleasing.

## NOTES

PAGE .

### THE EVILS OF PARTY-SPIRIT (cont.)

12. **form**: memorandum, articles.  
**with . . . peril**: at . . . risk.
13. **Diodorus Siculus**: Greek historian of the first century B.C.  
**Ichneumon**: mongoose, deadly foe of rats and snakes.  
**account**: (old sense) advantage.  
**a man of . . . parts and accomplishments**:  
Addison was doubtless thinking of the recent fall of the great Duke of Marlborough, who was deprived of the command of the army and other offices.
14. **of course**: naturally, as a matter of course.  
**the hat**: lifting the hat as a mark of respect.  
**Freeport**: 'a merchant of great eminence in the City of London,' and a member of *The Spectator* Club.
15. **the keeping up his interest**: We should now say 'the keeping up of his . . .' or 'keeping up his. . .'  
**bait**: halt for refreshment or rest.  
**betrayed us**: (figurative) threw us unwillingly.  
**take up with**: (old sense) put up with; tolerate.  
**an honest man**: i.e., member of one's own party.  
**bowling-green**: lawn for playing bowls, a game played with wooden balls.
16. **take him up**: accept his bet; play with him.  
**Will Wimble**: a good-natured obliging fellow, a good huntsman, and a friend of Sir Roger's.  
**principles**: beginnings.

### THE VISION OF MIRZAH

17. **habit**: (old sense) dress.  
19. **three score and ten**: see Psalm xc. 10.  
**at first of a thousand**: see Genesis, v.  
20. **but they fell . . . but many of them fell**: we should now say 'than' for 'but'.

**at the entrance . . . towards the end :** i.e., infancy . . . old age.

**some with scimitars :** soldiers.

21. **others with pill-boxes :** physicians.

**had they not been thus forced upon them :**  
'they' = persons ; 'them' = trap-doors. (Avoid such confusing pronouns.)

## OLIVER GOLDSMITH

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born in Ireland in 1728, the son of a clergyman ; throughout his youth and early manhood he was troubled by poverty and by inability to settle definitely on his profession. He died in 1774, as the result of excessive work and monetary anxiety and almost every imaginable sort of muddle. He first attracted fairly general attention with his poem, *The Traveller*, 1764, which was far surpassed in celebrity by the poem he produced in 1770, *The Deserted Village*. In 1773 he had an immense success with his comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*.

The prose of Goldsmith is among the most lucid and well-bred that we have ; but it has no subtleties, aspires to no sublimities. His famous novel *The Vicar of Wakefield*, issued in 1766, though completed some years earlier, well reveals to us one of the charms of his personality, his almost infinite capacity to take with humour and resignation the consequences of the troubles he brought upon himself.

*The Citizen of the World*, a collection of essays, is at least as interesting as anything else that Goldsmith wrote. The author satirizes English society by representing it as, he alleges, it appears to an Oriental. Goldsmith has been called, with truth, the greatest of all miscellaneous writers on the lighter side, during the eighteenth century. His complete success with his contemporaries and with succeeding generations in all that he attempted is clear

evidence of the universality of the appeal made by his writings.

## THE FAME COACH

PAGE.

24. **more agreeable . . . least deserved** : we should now say 'less' in place of 'least'.  
**bridles up** : pretends to be offended.  
**debts** : what is due.
25. **notwithstanding** : we should now say 'notwithstanding the fact that'.
26. **berlin** : an old-fashioned four-wheeled covered carriage, with a seat behind covered with a hood;  
**berlin fashion** : made in the shape of a berlin carriage.  
**seemed the most . . . in the world** : rewrite 'seemed, at a distance, the most convenient vehicle in the world'.  
**madé up to** : made myself agreeable to; curried favour with.  
**cargo** : note contempt.  
**Colley gave Mr. Pope** : Pope had made Colley Cibber the hero of the *Dunciad* in the final edition of that poem.  
**easy** : comfortably.
27. **The Bee** : a collection of essays by Goldsmith, from which this is taken.  
**presented** : applied.  
**demandé gentleman's satisfaction** : challenged him to a duel.
28. **Jehu** : See 2 Kings, ix. 20.  
**brass** : i.e., handle.  
**Proteus** : one who assumes different shapes.  
**rigadoon** : a lively and complicated dance, now obsolete.  
**stage** : 'coach' understood.  
**miscellany** : miscellaneous.
29. **another gentleman . . . approaching** : Dr. Johnson.

30. **The Rambler**: a periodical in 208 numbers issued by Dr. Johnson.  
**Apollo**: patron of music and poetry.  
**Clio**: the muse of history.  
**He carried in his hand a bundle of essays**: *Treatise of Human Nature, Essays Moral and Political, An Essay on Miracles*, etc. of David Hume (1711-1776) author also of a famous *History of Great Britain*.  
**the last volume of my history**: reference to the contemporary unpopularity of the *first* volume.
31. **a voluminous history**: Smollett, the novelist, brought out, in 1757, a large but incomplete *History of England*. He is now more famous for his novels than for his history.  
**Cervantes**: Spanish author of Don Quixote.  
**Segrais**: a French poet of the seventeenth century and friend of Madame La Fayette. Some of her novels were published under the name of Segrais.

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY

33. **the puny child of dust**: man (contrast 'pride').  
**consequence**: importance. ('A living dog is better than a dead lion.')  
**toiled**: so the Chinaman thinks now.  
**awful**: (old sense) sublime.
34. **wit**: intelligence; understanding.
35. **got**: (old sense) gained; profited.
36. **answerers of books**: critics.  
**candour**: impartiality; freedom from malice.  
**except**: unless.  
**mandarin**: Goldsmith uses this word for 'aristocrat'.
37. **made up to**: approached.  
**that there (threepence)**: vulgar for 'that'.
38. **Jacob's pillow**: see Genesis, xxviii. 11.  
**General Monk**: who brought about the Restoration in 1660.

## PAGE

39. **ecclesiastical beggars**: beggars in a church (not clergyman-beggars).

• VENDORS OF QUACK MEDICINES

40. **acquiring**: by over-eating and drinking.  
 41. **electuary**: powder mixed with honey.  
**boiled up**: Medea restored Æson to youth by this process.  
**but receive**: read 'but most physicians receive'.  
 42. **form sake**: idiom, omitting 's'.

THE DISTRESSES OF A COMMON SOLDIER

In this essay Goldsmith reveals the courage of the poor.

43. **admiration and pity**: admiration because of their greatness, and pity because of their calamity.  
 44. **Ovid**: Roman poet, banished from Rome by Augustus, died in exile. His poems contain pathetic accounts of his sufferings in exile.  
**Cicero**: Roman orator, banished from Rome for a short time.  
**Rabutin**: seventeenth century French courtier, exiled from the court and forced to live in retirement from 1666 to 1683.  
 45. **to boot**: as well.  
**put upon the parish**: i.e. thrown on Poor Law relief.  
**liberty**: run.  
**bound out**: indentured as an apprentice.  
 46. **what will you have on't**: what do you think happened?  
**I could give no account**: 'failure to give an account of oneself' is a punishable offence.  
**Newgate**: a prison.  
**plantations**: colonies.  
**hold**: space below deck for storing cargo.

47. **worked my passage home**: paid for my passage home by services.  
**press-gang**: body of men who forced one to serve in the army or navy.  
**list**: enlist.  
**Val and Fontenoy**: both in 1745.  
**landman**: one who lives or works on land; *opp.* seaman.  
**corporal**: a non-commissioned officer.  
 48. **the present war**: Seven Years' War (1756-63).  
**boatswain**: *pron.* 'bosun'.  
**shammed Abraham**: feigned sickness. (Abraham men were vagabonds who begged on false pretences.)  
**seasoned**: specially prepared, by previous experience.  
 49. **quay**: *pron.* 'key'.  
**privateer**: armed vessel owned and officered by private persons and authorized by Government to attack enemy ships.  
**fell in with**: came across.  
**to it we went**: engaged in vigorous fighting.  
**yard-arm and yard-arm**: the ships being so close that their sail yards touched or crossed; at close quarters.  
**to Brest**: because he had escaped from jail in Brest.

## WILLIAM COBBETT

WILLIAM COBBETT was born in 1762, the son of a farmer. After varied experiences in America and in England, he established in 1802 the *Weekly Political Register*, from which his *Rural Rides* were collected in 1830. As a publicist he was in serious trouble with the authorities. He died in 1835.

Cobbett's career was troubled and eventful. He always kept the ideal of the liberty of the subject before him and



he was never afraid to express himself without restraint in defence of any cause that won his support.

Cobbett's English style is 'the perfection of the vernacular made literary'. In reading him it is impossible to forget the almost aggressive vigour of an experienced debater and controversialist. Cobbett's writings are invariably alive with vigour and zest. Often inaccurate and unpractical in what he preached, he cannot fail to hold his readers' interest by virtue of a never-failing sincerity that informs every line he wrote.

We have given several examples of his work here. The first contains sound advice for every person who writes English. From his *Rural Rides* the reader may form a correct impression of the unspoiled English scene. But our extracts show rather the 'vigorous human-heartedness' of the man.

## ON PUTTING SENTENCES TOGETHER

PAGE .

51. **My dear James**: the Grammar was written in the form of a series of letters to his son, James.

52. **have thought . . . shall write**: note the difference in tense.

**never stop . . . words**: this is good advice to the Englishman to whom the right words come naturally. (See also p. 123.)

**Lindley Murray**: his *English Grammar* was published in 1795.

## COURTSHIP

56. **my wife**: Ann Reid, the girl who later became his wife.

57. **New Brunswick**: in Canada. Here Cobbett spent five years, as a private and later as a sergeant-major in the 54th Foot.

**my morning's writing**: at this time (1784) he was clerk to the Commandant of the garrison.

**Preston**: in Lancashire, where Cobbett stood

for election to Parliament in 1826, and was defeated.

58. **the artillery**: in which *her* father was a sergeant.

**Woolwich**: near London; the headquarters of the Royal Artillery.

59. **lay out**: to spend (*opp.* 'lay up' = 'save').

**Mr. Pitt**: then Prime Minister.

**Nootka Sound**: between the islands of Nootka and Vancouver. In 1789 Spain very nearly went to war with England.

**Lord Edward Fitzgerald**: an Irish rebel; died in 1798 of a wound received during his arrest.

### AN IDYLL OF NEW BRUNSWICK

62. **lapse of forty years**: the 'idyll' took place in 1786, when the girl to whom he was engaged was in England and he was with his regiment in Canada. He married his Ann Reid in February 1792.

63. **I had made a nest**: i.e. earlier in the night.

**Yankee Loyalists**: colonists of New England who were loyal to the English Crown and refused to join the War of American Independence.

64. **New England**: N. E. portion of U. S. A.

**once . . . two years ago**: Ann Reid, whom he saw in 1784.

66. **frolic**: i. e. dance.

**appellations**: (old sense) calling by name.

**succeeding nights**: consecutive nights.

67. **frost of age**: white hair.

68. **if any of these**: add 'had happened'.

**never would . . . heard of me**: 'I would have been all my life an obscure farmer in Canada.'

### DOMESTIC HAPPINESS

This extract relates to his first residence in the U.S.A., which was from October 1792 to June 1800.

69. **the great danger**: childbirth.

- hot countries** : Philadelphia is 40° north latitude.
70. **business to occupy . . . time** : he was then living by teaching English to French refugees in Philadelphia.
- gèt her in water and wood** : get in water and wood for her.
71. **appointment** : engagement.
- saue la tonnerre toujours** : unless, of course, it thunders. (*lit.* 'excepting thunder always.')
- romp** : play, like children.
- though well able** : grammar demands 'though I was well able'.
72. **that famous Grammar** : his *Tuteur Anglais*, published 1795.
73. **Waverley Abbey** : a ruin in Surrey (twelfth century), which suggested the title to Scott.
- hanger** : steep valley, where trees seem to *hang*. (Note the unintended but marked musical quality of this paragraph.)

### ON SHOOTING

74. **the game** : hunting of wild animals and birds, by shooting with guns or coursing with hounds.
- make a shift** : manage, contrive.
- walls . . . to take of** : refusing the clean side of the road, being discourteous.
- meeting-houses** : places of worship of Quakers and some Non-conformists.
75. **between September and February** : the game season.
76. **slaughterers** : shooters who have succeeded in killing, as against 'the shooter who has been missing' his aim.
77. **double shots** : shots each of which killed two birds.
- upon the wing** : in flight.
78. **last war** : the Anglo-American War of 1812-14.
- James Madison** : a leader of the Democrats, fourth President of the United States.

## NOTES

**that watchful government :** 'strict petticoat government.'

**in that form of words :** with an oath.

## ROBERT SOUTHEY

ROBERT SOUTHEY was born in 1774, and died in 1843. His mind had almost entirely failed him for a considerable time before his death.

He was made Poet Laureate in 1813 and he wrote widely in prose and verse during his long literary career. Hardly any of his poetry is read today and this neglect is due not only to the uneven level of his accomplishment but also to his choice of strange and unsuitable metres in which to express himself. As a prose writer his fame rests mainly upon his biography of *Nelson* (1813) and the miscellany, drawn-out but full of good things, *The Doctor*.

It has been thought by many good judges that Southey's is the perfect style of all work : that is his eulogy, but implied in it is a criticism. For invaluable as a style of all work may be to a man of all work, the possession of it indicates lack of salient literary personality. It is the tang of personality that is wanting in Southey's virtually faultless prose. But in *The Doctor*, an anonymous work in which Southey rather too deliberately set out to be personal, he perhaps came nearer to achieving a personal style than anywhere else in his voluminous writings.

His letters offer us a complete self-revelation of the man as he was. They are easy and vivid and, while composed without effort, show no signs of carelessness.

## A RETIRED TOBACCONIST

PAGE

80. **Mr. Allison :** 'a good man, who having realized a respectable fortune as a tobacconist, and put out his sons in life according to their respective inclinations, had retired from business at the age of

threescore, and established himself with an unmarried daughter, and a maiden sister, some ten years younger than himself, in his native town of Doncaster.'

**Strahan** (William): (1715–85), printer, and publisher to Hume, Johnson, Gibbon and others; his son also was a publisher.

**typarchical**: neologism formed of type + archy (cf. Squirearchy); i.e. a dynasty of printers.

**exciseman**: tobacco was subject to excise duty.

81. **Bacon**: the clergyman,

**the Doctor**: Dr. Dove, both of Doncaster.

**'withered on the virgin thorn'**: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I. i.

**Ruth**: daughter-in-law of Naomi. See Old Testament, *Book of Ruth*.

82. **put out**: to place a person away from home in some employment.

**Captain's ship**: Of his three sons, one succeeded his father in the tobacco business, another became a clergyman, the third was a Mate in the Merchants' Service.

**'Bury me,' said Jacob**: Genesis, xlix. 29–31.

83. **buried . . . Rachel**: Genesis, xlviii. 7.

84. **evil, . . . as such**: note correct use of 'as such'; 'such' is a pronoun and must refer to a preceding noun; here it refers to 'evil'.

86. **squirearchy**: class of landed proprietors (cf. typarchical).

## LETTERS

*To S. T. Coleridge*

87. **Edith**: Mrs. Southey. Southey and Coleridge married two sisters, Edith and Sarah.

88. **Guernsey**: one of the Channel Islands.

**whole**: unhurt.

**Four years' absence**: Southey had spent some months in 1796 in Lisbon, with his uncle Mr. Hill.

**Manuel**: his old Portuguese servant.

89. **Alentejo**: province of Portugal, on the eastern shore of Lisbon Bay. Lisbon is on the western shore of the Bay.

**Malvern**: 1,400 feet high at the highest point.

**my employments**: he was writing *Thalaba*, a long poem, published 1801, and collecting materials for a *History of Portugal*.

**guttled**: 'to gut' is to extract the essence from a book

**Rickman** (John): statistician, friend of Southey and Lamb.

90. **Madoc**: a long poem, published 1805.

**Lyrical Ballads**: famous volume of poems by Wordsworth and Coleridge, 1798.

**Gebir**: an epic poem by W. S. Landor.

**Christabel . . . Three Graves**: two poems, both unfinished, by Coleridge; the first is very beautiful.

*To Charles Danvers*

91. **Charles Danvers**: an intimate friend of Southey's. He died in 1814.

**Keswick**: a town in Cumberland, in the Lake District.

**Skiddaw**: mountain (overlooking Keswick), 3,054 feet high.

**calves . . . bulls**: note the pun, permissible in a private letter.

**Monchique**: mountain in South Portugal.

92. **Algarve**: province in South Portugal.

**my poor child**: in August 1803, his daughter Margaret had died.

**he who tempers . . . lamb**: God. (A quotation from Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.)

93. **memento mori**: 'remember you must die'; reminder or warning of death.

**Moses**: pet-name of Hartley Coleridge, son of S. T. Coleridge. He was born in 1796 and was being

## PAGE

brought up by the Southey's. Hartley Coleridge died in October 1853.

**King Pharaoh's daughter:** See Exodus, ii. 5.

**I'se:** (child-talk) I am.

*To S. T. Coleridge*

94. **Fletcher:** a Keswick carrier.

**metrical romance upon the Cid:** a poem of the twelfth century, celebrating the achievements of the favourite hero of Spain, the Cid (el Seyd). Southey's translation, *The Chronicle of the Cid*, was published in 1808.

95. **Peter . . . upstairs:** St. Peter, gate-keeper of Heaven.

**dead than living:** cf. his poem, 'My Days among the Dead are past.'

**set him up in:** provide him adequately with.

*To Charles Danvers*

96. **Penrith:** a town in Cumberland.

**Mrs. Wilson:** the Southey's' house-keeper.

97. **explication:** explanation.

98. **John:** the 'noble jackass'.

*To Henry Taylor*

**Henry Taylor** (1800-1886): afterwards became Sir Henry. He was a friend and correspondent of Southey's, and accompanied him on his continental tours in 1825 and 1826.

99. **Westminster:** famous school in London, where Southey was a pupil between 1788 and 1792.

**rocks and shallows . . . in the chart:** difficulties which have all occurred before.

*To C. C. Southey*

100. **Cuthbert:** his son; in 1838 an undergraduate at Queen's College, Oxford.

## WALTER BAGEHOT

WALTER BAGEHOT, critic and economist, was born at Langport in Somerset, on February 3, 1826. For many years his writings on the Constitution and on economic problems were rated higher than his literary criticism. At the present time his reputation as a critic of literature stands at least as high as it has ever done. Few English writers show a neater turn of phrase than Bagehot. His intelligence was remarkable and his powers of interpretation considerable. His humour is never obtrusive but it serves excellently to beguile the way. It is probable that Bagehot's influence on present-day criticism and academic teaching has been underestimated. The volumes of his collected critical essays are inspiring and, sometimes, provocative. Bagehot died at Langport in 1877.

The prose of Walter Bagehot is exactly expressive of his unduped and incisive mind. It is the prose of one who is a man of the world, a man of business, as well as a man of the study and the library. It is not an instrument for exploring the greater mysteries of life and literature; but for whatever can be done by an exceptionally shrewd and thoroughly informed mind on problems capable of rational solution, it is the perfect instrument. There was no nonsense about Bagehot, and there was no nonsense about his style. It is purposeful, direct, clear, and cannot dally by the way even when a richly suggestive subject affords excuse.

## SHAKESPEARE—THE MAN

## PAGE

103. **the name of whose essay . . . this paper ?**: this essay was written as a review of a French book by M. François Guizot, *Shakespeare and his Times : A Literary Study*.

**M. Guizot** (1787–1874): French statesman and historian; minister under Louis Philippe, the Citizenking.

**his fall** : after the Revolution of 1848.



**discours** : (Fr.) speech.

**second . . . assembly** : the first being the British House of Commons.

104. **émeute** : (Fr.), a rising or disturbance.

**Baron Rothschild** (1840–1915): member of a Jewish family of bankers and financiers.

105. **Alison** (Archibald): early nineteenth century historian, author of a monumental *History of Europe during the French Revolution*.

**cast** : formed into a fixed shape, as molten metal.

**West** (Benjamin) : famous painter, 1738–1820.

**doctrinaire** : pedantic theorist.

107. **the 'lunar theory'** : the deduction of the moon's motion from the Law of Gravitation.

**Cochin China fowls** : a special breed of fowl.

**'Daffodils . . . Cytherea's breath'** : *The Winter's Tale*, IV. iv.

108. **'My hounds . . . in Thessaly'** : *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V.

**'daintiness of ear'** : *Richard II*, V. v.

**'portion in this life'** : in his *Reason of Church Government*, Milton wrote of his inward prompting 'that by labour and intense study (which I take to be my portion in this life), joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die.'

109. **the conversation** : between two respectable middle-aged people, 'prudent and staid guides.'

**Shallow** : a foolish country justice in Shakespeare's *2 Henry IV*.

**larked** : 'to lark' is to ride a horse across country.

**fivebar** : a five-barred gate ; a high gate.

**argillaceous** : clayey.

## THE EDUCATION OF PITT

111. **his position** : he was the second son of the Earl of Chatham, the Prime Minister.

## NOTES

### PAGE

112. **unusually early age**: he took his M.A. degree at the age of 16!
113. **Wilberforce** (1759–1833): leader of the cause of the abolition of slavery.
114. **read off**: translate orally.
115. **naive expression . . . Commons**: the younger Pitt said as a boy, 'I am glad I am *not* the eldest son; I should like to speak in the House of Commons, like papa.'
- The Wealth of Nations**: Adam Smith's pioneer work on economics.

## SIR WILLIAM MARRIS

SIR WILLIAM MARRIS (born 1873) entered the I. C. S. in 1895 and retired in 1928 as Governor of the United Provinces. Besides being a successful administrator and statesman, he is a fine scholar and has translated Homer's *Odyssey* as well as Horace and Catullus into English verse.

In the speeches, we see examples of a plain, straightforward style fully competent to convey information and exhortation in a pleasant and effective manner. The structure and ordering of his paragraphs are well worth studying.

## CONVOCATION ADDRESS

### PAGE

118. **salient points**: military metaphor.  
**one line**: domestic affairs.  
**another line**: foreign affairs.
121. **'unlit lamp . . . ungirt loin'**: see end of *The Statue and the Bust*. See also Luke, xii. 35.  
**at a time when, etc.**: the period of De Quincey.  
**classicisms**: Latinisms.
124. **letting values**: rental values.
126. **the cause above the prize**: Newbolt's *Clifton Chapel*: 'To set the cause above renown,  
To love the game beyond the prize.'

## NOTES

### MUSIC CONFERENCE

#### PAGE

129. **concord of sweet sounds**: quoted from *The Merchant of Venice*, V. i.  
**My colleague**: Rai Rajeshwar Bali, the Education Minister.
130. **in the sequel**: as things developed afterwards; as it turned out.  
**Tyrtaeus**: a Greek poet of the seventh century B.C. who exercised an important influence on the Spartans, composing their dissensions at home and animating their courage in the field.  
**Marseillaise**: French Revolutionary hymn, adopted as marching song by Revolutionary troops, now French National Anthem.  
**Congreve**:  
 Music has charms to soothe a savage breast,  
 To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.  
*Mourning Bride*, I. i.
**Dryden**: see odes on *St. Cecilia* and *Alexander's Feast*.  
**Pope**: *Ode for Music on St. Cecilia's Day*.  
**Milton**: *At a Solemn Music* and *Comus*.  
**Twelfth Night**: the opening speech.
131. **'I am never merry . . . music'**: *The Merchant of Venice*, V. i.  
**their artful aid**: from Pope's 'apt alliteration's artful aid'.
133. **under any variety of inflexion**: in all its modifications.

### HINDUSTANI ACADEMY

135. **production**: get-up; quality of paper, printing, binding, etc.
136. **production**: writing and publication.  
**best-sellers**: highly popular books.
138. **the subject-matter**: 'the ordinary things of Indian life.'

## PAGE

**the Western States of America:** 'the Wild West ;' the new settled colonies of the U.S.A.

**epically treated:** e.g., by Fennimore Cooper.

**the returned soldier:** the soldier returned from fighting in foreign lands.

**Balzac:** a popular and prolific French novelist of the first half of the nineteenth century.

139. **lyrics of today:** e.g., those of Bridges, Rupert Brooke and C. M. Doughty.

## HILAIRE BELLOC

HILAIRE BELLOC (born 1870) is a most prolific and versatile writer, being at once poet, novelist and essayist. As a traveller, soldier, historian and controversialist, he has at his command a wonderful variety of subject-matter; and he wields a style which combines the grace and lucidity of the best French prose with the weight and power of the best English prose.

The two essays here reprinted are from one and the same volume, *Hills and the Sea*; their differences in style and mood give some, though not an adequate, idea of Mr. Belloc's width of range.

'The Good Woman' is to be taken not as a model to be imitated but as a monument to be admired. It shows the capacity of modern English prose to convey a sentiment by the music and suggestion as well as by the mere meaning of words.

## THE ONION-EATER

## PAGE

143. **that cathedral:** Winchester, the ancient capital of Wessex.

**a man:** note emphasis derived from position.

144. **No Man's Land:** the forest.

147. **Combe:** valley.

148. **escarpment:** steep bank.

**Great Day:** of Judgement.

## NOTES

### THE GOOD WOMAN

#### PAGE

**faced with cornerings of stone** : with the corner-surfaces covered with a layer of stone.

**panels** : distinct compartments of surface sunk below or raised above the general level of the wall.

149. **September** : in autumn when it is windy.

**silence** : temporary lull.

**sheath** : thin layer.

150. **Mozart** (1756-91) : German musical composer, improvident and poor; one of the 'unsubdued children' of the world. See the Essay on 'Childishness', p. 154.

151. **enemies of mankind** : selfishness, envy, fear, etc.  
**in an evil hour** : as a source of strength and purification.

**conversation** : (old sense) behaviour ; activity.

### ESSAYS FROM 'THE TIMES'

These two essays are taken from the 'Third Leaders' of the great London newspaper, *The Times*. These Leaders do not deal with current political or economic topics but treat in a detached, wistful way 'of man, of nature, and of human life' in their larger, more permanent aspect. They are anonymous and make an effort to be impersonal, and so represent a contemporary variety of normal English prose.

### CHILDISHNESS

#### PAGE

154. **struggle for life** : a biological term.

**the dew that sat on Julia's hair** : a poem by Herrick, beginning, 'Dew sate on Julia's hair and spangled too.'

155. **Whittington** (Dick) : thrice Lord Mayor of London between 1397 and 1420, bequeathed a large fortune

## NOTES

### PAGE

to charities. The legend of his cat was founded on ancient folk-tales.

**irrelevance . . . relevance:** i.e. freedom from, submission to, the struggle for life. •

**always:** both day and night.

156. **a relevance of their own:** a relation to one's inner life and to the things of the imagination.

**struggle for life . . . irrelevant:** i.e. unrelated to our inner life and to the world of imagination.

**from it:** from the struggle for life.

157. **more scent in the garden:** the garden is better for the rain and we are better for our sorrows.

### MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETIES

158. **the miller:** 'The miller of Dee,' a poem by Isaac Bickerstaffe.

**the Social Contract:** theory of Rousseau and others that government is based on voluntary agreement of the people.

159. **treason, when it prospers:** Sir John Harrington's 'Treason doth never prosper; what's the reason? Why, if it prosper, none dare call it treason.'

160. **'stunner':** (slang), one who stuns; wonderful person.  
**the fact . . . recognize a prophet:** a capacity for hero-worship.

**limited company:** trading company or firm, of which each member is responsible only up to a limited amount for the debts of the company.

**no distinction:** because the desire for money is common to all human beings.

### NEVILLE CARDUS

Neville Cardus is, during summer, the cricket correspondent, and, during winter, the musical critic, of the great English newspaper, *The Manchester Guardian*.

## NOTES

This extract is the prelude to Mr. Cardus' little book on *Cricket* in 'The English Heritage' series. Mr. Cardus' delicate prose has captured the very spirit of the English countryside as well as of the English game.

### CRICKET

#### PAGE

162. **I travel**: Mr. Cardus has been a 'cricket correspondent' for many years.  
**cricket season**: in England, during the spring and summer, i.e., April to August.  
**Woolley**: an attractive English batsman and useful bowler. He represented England against Australia in the Test matches between 1909 and 1926.  
**'laughter of friends . . . heaven'**: telescoping the last two lines of Rupert Brooke's sonnet 'The Soldier'.  
**cricket's beauty**: note implied personification.  
**cadence**: sense both of music and of falling.
163. **flannels**: white trousers.  
**jewel**: on account of the bright raindrops.  
**slender tracery**: the trunk and bare boughs are beginning to put on a few light leaves and twigs, which look like the ornamental open-work on a heavy building; later, in summer, the leaves and twigs will become less 'modest', more 'arrogant' and 'prominent'.  
**Little Puddleton**: imaginary name for a very small village. Cf. Dickens' Muggleton; also Humphrey Brown, for 'a poor man', p. 105.  
**Lord's**: cricket ground, headquarters of the Marylebone Cricket Club (M.C.C.) and therefore of English cricket.  
**crude but not inglorious Hobbs**: a perversion of the phrase in Gray's 'Elegy': 'Some mute, inglorious Milton.'  
**Hobbs**: great English batsman, played for England against Australia in five tours, 1907-08, 1911-12, 1920-21, 1924-25, 1928-29.

**flings his bat**: not sure of his stroke.

**when a wicket falls**: i.e. while waiting for the next batsman to enter.

**the deep**: or 'deep field', the position of the fieldsmen who stand far back on the 'on' or 'off' side facing the batsman.

164. **rhetorically**: spectacularly; sensationally.

**cup-tie final**: the final match between the two surviving sides in a knock-out competition for England's Football Cup.

**fold their tents**: 'like the Arabs,' in Longfellow's 'The Day is Done'.

**the new darling**: the football season begins when the cricket season ends.

**autumn grows in everything**: from Browning's 'Andrea del Sarto'.

165. **to hit the ball**: and not merely block it.

**from a clear sky**: from a blue unclouded sky, i.e. unexpectedly.

**burns a dull slow fire**: is uninteresting.

**bodefully**: ominously.

**foozle**: (slang) bungle; make a mess of.

**hedgcs**: hems in; surrounds.

**long-on**: man fielding at bowler's right rear.

**the rubber**: (usually) the third match when each side has won one; (here used as meaning) the deciding match. Of the five Test matches played in Australia in 1903-4, England won the first two played at Sydney and Melbourne; the third, played at Adelaide, was won by Australia. The fourth match, if won by England, would be decisive. It was played at Sydney, and won by England.

**Clem Hill and Victor Trumper**: great Australian batsmen.

166. **Wilfred Rhodes**: English bowler.

**A. E. Knight**: English Cricketer and author of *The Complete Cricketer*.

**Macdonald**: a great Australian fast-bowler who



qualified to play for Lancashire; at the top of his form in 1925.

**break-back:** also called the 'off-break'; when the ball is bowled by a right-handed bowler, it turns  
 \*from the off stump towards the leg.

167. **Lord Halsbury:** Lord Chancellor, compiler of the *Laws of England*, the standard work on the subject, originally in twenty-eight volumes.

168. '**Sport of Kings**': like racing, hunting or chess.

**W. G. Grace** (1848-1915): holder of most cricketing records until eclipsed recently by J. B. Hobbs.

Note the use of the following words and phrases in this piece and try to understand their full significance:—

batting his way . . . . . felicitous runs; to take on the very colours of the passing months; ambition . . . . . breaks into bud; bats and flannels are chaste; at the crown of the year; fields white with players in hot action; their processional way; flings his bat; feels his body tingle; willow thwacks leather; set their teeth; see nothing in the world but a middle stump; give themselves to the earth; batsmen thoroughly set; tossed up over after over; angling for the catch; dead and therefore immortal; genial bulk; he was an institution.